



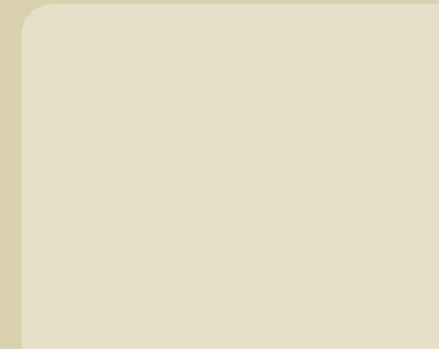
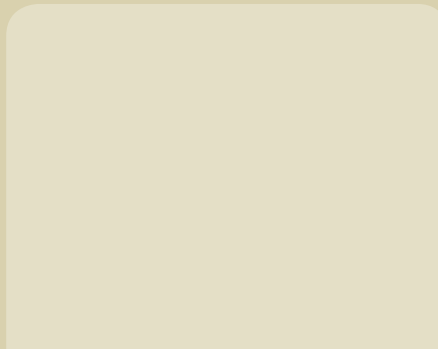
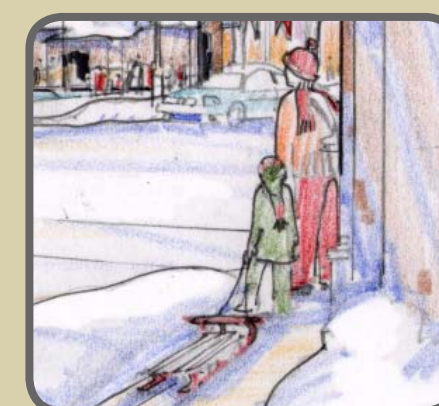
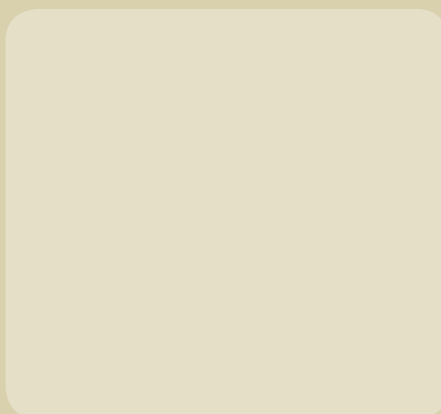
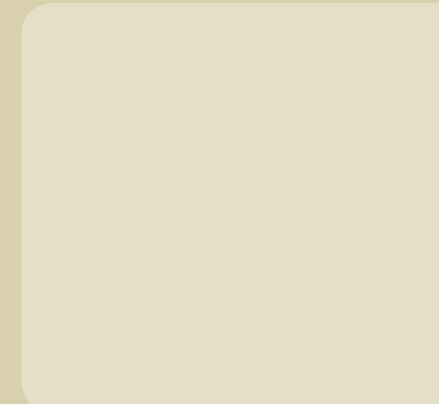
GAITHERSBURG OLDE TOWNE DISTRICT MASTER PLAN



Prepared for:
THE CITY OF GAITHERSBURG, MD

Prepared by:
 **TORTI GALLAS AND PARTNERS, INC.**

February 2005 **DRAFT**







GAITHERSBURG OLDE TOWNE DISTRICT MASTER PLAN

Prepared for:



THE CITY OF GAITHERSBURG

31 South Summit Avenue, Gaithersburg, MD 20877

Prepared by:



TORTI GALLAS AND PARTNERS, INC.

1300 Spring Street, 4th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910

In association with:



ROBERT CHARLES LESSER & COMPANY

7200 Wisconsin Avenue, 7th Floor, Bethesda, MD 20814



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CITY OF GAITHERSBURG

Mayor and City Council

Mayor Sidney A. Katz
Council Vice-President Henry F. Marraffa, Jr.
Council Member Stanley J. Alster
Council Member Geri Edens
Council Member Blanche H. Keller
Council Member John B. Schlichting

Planning Commission

Commissioner John Bauer
Commissioner Victor Hicks
Commissioner Leonard Levy
Commissioner Danielle L. Winborne
Commissioner Matt Hopkins

Office of the City Manager

David B. Humpton, City Manager
Fred Felton, Assistant City Manager
Tony Tomasello, Assistant City Manager
Cindy Hines, Olde Towne Coordinator

Office of Planning and Code Administration

Greg Ossont, Director Planning and Code Administration
Mark DePoe, Long Range Planning Director
Kirk Eby, GIS Planner
Rob Robinson, Planner

CONSULTANT TEAM

Torti Gallas and Partners, Inc.

Planning, Urban Design, Architecture, Project Management

Neal I. Payton, AIA, Principal-in-Charge
Christopher A. Atkinson, Project Manager
Grant Epstein, Sr. Project Planner
Alejandra Pineiro, Project Planner
Natasha Fahim, Project Planner
Leslye Howerton, Project Planner
Michael Morrissey, Renderer

Robert Charles Lesser and Company, LLC

Economic Planning

Marc McCauley, Vice President
Ann Glendon, Associate



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

With a number of City-owned parcels available, and a renewed interest in Olde Towne as a source of civic pride, the opportunity to reinforce the forward momentum established in 1995 is now.

THE CHARRETTE PROCESS

The Planning Charrette held in November 2004 provided residents, business owners, property owners City staff and officials, and the development community and developers an opportunity to work together to plan Olde Towne’s future.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Community input created the foundation for the development of the Preferred Draft Plan for Olde Towne.

EXISTING PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

Understanding existing physical conditions—strengths, constraints, and opportunities—is critical to establish a realistic future for Olde Towne.

EXISTING MARKET CONDITIONS

Existing market conditions indicate the type and intensity of development that can occur in Olde Towne.

THE MASTER PLAN

The Plan is the physical manifestation of the community’s hopes and desires for the long-term development of Olde Towne. It provides a glimpse into the future.

2

4

6

8

18

20



The recently completed History Park has enhanced Olde Towne's aesthetics.



Park Station Apartments has increased the availability of residential opportunities.



City-owned property, such as the "Y" site offer new development opportunities for Olde Towne.



The newly-restored Thomas Cannery Building increased available commercial space while preserving a piece of Olde Towne's past.



A newly constructed Class A office building indicates renewed development interest in Olde Towne.



The extension of West Diamond Avenue into Olde Towne has improved visibility and access to I-270.

INTRODUCTION

With a number of City-owned parcels available, and a renewed interest in Olde Towne as a source of civic pride, the opportunity to reinforce the forward momentum established in 1995 is now.

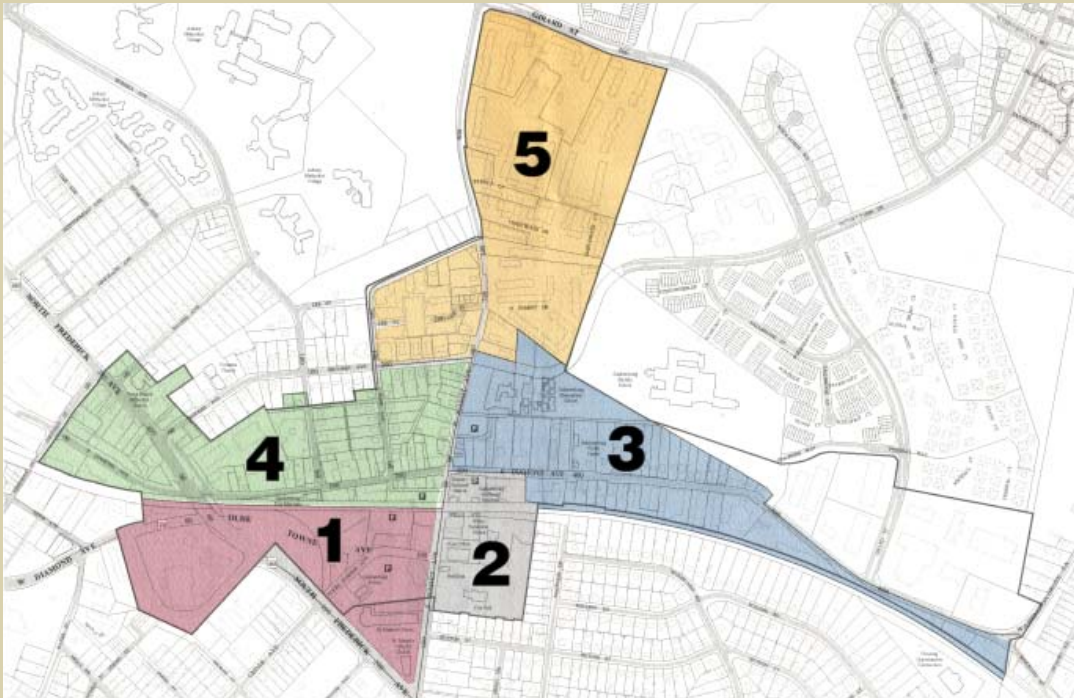
Since its adoption in 1995, the Downtown Plan for Olde Towne Gaithersburg has been extremely effective in establishing a forward momentum of urban revitalization and economic growth for the Olde Towne District in the City of Gaithersburg. City residents, merchants, elected officials, and other stakeholders worked hard to develop a vision for Olde Towne that created a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly urban center.

Over the last ten years, several implemented projects have increased the availability of residential opportunities and commercial office space, improved vehicular access, addressed long-standing parking deficiencies, brought high-quality educational opportunities, enhanced the aesthetics of the community, and increased the quality of life for residents, visitors, and employees of Olde Towne alike.

As with any city across the country, normal cycles of urban change and shifts in socioeconomic dynamics periodically

require the creative conversion to new infill uses. With a number of City-owned and underutilized parcels available, and a renewed interest in successful downtown redevelopment as a source of civic pride, the opportunity to reinforce the forward momentum established in 1995 is now.

In September 2004, the City of Gaithersburg initiated a study to update the original 1995 Downtown Plan for Olde Towne Gaithersburg. The update, the contents of these pages, establishes planning solutions that overcome the current challenges facing Olde Towne, as well as build upon the strong foundation of assets that already exist. Furthermore, the consensus-driven, financially feasible plan will build a strong, sustainable Olde Towne over the next 5 to 10 years.



For planning purposes, the Olde Towne District was divided into five planning sectors.



Gaithersburg's residents were invited to attend the Planning Charrette.



Public input was critical to the plan's success.



Participants were invited to post their comments on plan proposals.

Wednesday, November 10, 2004:
 9AM-7PM: Opening Presentation

Thursday, November 11, 2004:
 9AM-7PM: Charrette Work Session

- 10AM-12PM: Sector 1 Stakeholders
- 1PM-3PM: Sector 2 Stakeholders
- 3PM - 5PM: Sector 3 Stakeholders

 7PM-9PM: Topic-Focused Discussion: You're Vision for Olde Town?

Friday, November 12, 2004:
 9AM-7PM: Charrette Work Session

- 10AM-12PM: Sector 4 Stakeholders
- 1PM-3PM: Sector 5 Stakeholders

 7PM-9PM: Topic-Focused Discussion: Public Space

Saturday, November 13, 2004:
 9AM-7PM: Charrette Work Session
 7PM-9PM: Topic-Focused Discussion Work-in-progress Presentation

Monday, November 15, 2004:
 9AM-7PM: Charrette Work Session

Monday, November 22, 2004:
 9AM-7PM: Closing Presentation (Televised Local Cable)

The Planning Charrette Schedule.

THE CHARRETTE PROCESS

The Planning Charrette held in November 2004 provided residents, business owners, property owners, City staff and officials, and the development community an opportunity to work together to plan Olde Towne's future.

At the heart of the visioning process was the Planning Charrette, an event held in November 2004, that brought together a team of professional planning consultants and stakeholders to plan the future of Olde Towne. Maximum public involvement was critical to secure the best possible master plan. Residents, merchants, property owners, and City officials were invited to participate fully in the Charrette process.

Stakeholders and the general public were made aware of the event through a variety of public outreach efforts including:

- A postcard mailed to merchants and property owners in mid-October 2004 to announce the project and request involvement and input
- Invitations to the opening kick-off presentation mailed to business owners, property owners, residents, and key stakeholders
- Meetings with select Stakeholder groups including the Mayor and members of City Council, the Planning Commission, the

Olde Towne Advisory Committee (OTAC), Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC), and the City's professional staff

- A newsletter distributed to Gaithersburg residents that described the Charrette process, schedule, and encouraged involvement
- An informational web-site
- A large banner hanging over South Summit Avenue announcing the Charrette

The Planning Charrette began on November 10, 2004 with an opening presentation held at the St. Martin's School. Led by the consultant team, the presentation included best practices in downtown revitalization; urban design; and a review of the consultant team's initial impressions of Olde Towne's strengths, constraints, and opportunities. Over 100 people were in attendance at this opening presentation.

The events held on November 11th, 12th, 13th and 15th each involved day-long Charrette Work Sessions. The Work Sessions represented the core of the Charrette process,

allowing the public and Olde Towne stakeholders to work one-on-one with the consultant team, offer ideas, and critique work in-progress.

Additional meetings were held each day. Stakeholders representing each of the five Olde Towne District sectors (see the planning sectors diagram at left) were invited to explore their ideas and opportunities unique to each at a series of meetings held on November 11th and 12th. A diagram illustrating the five sectors is shown at left.

Topic-focused meetings conducted the evenings of November 11th and 12th allowed Charrette participants an opportunity to discuss an overall vision for Olde Towne and public space opportunities.

As the week's events progressed, a series of development alternatives and strategies for their implementation emerged. Charrette participants were invited to review the alternatives and offer their comments at a final topic-focused meeting the evening

of November 13th. The consultant team refined the plan based on the comments received and prepared a Draft Master Plan.

The Charrette concluded with a televised presentation during a special Mayor and City Council Work Session held November 22, 2004. The presentation included a review of the Charrette process; Olde Towne strengths, opportunities and constraints; a review of market conditions; and a review of the Draft Master Plan.

A detailed schedule of all Charrette events is shown at left.

COMMUNITY INPUT

SECTOR 1

- Residential and office Development needs increase in height, like 6 stories
- Leverage the ““Y”” site’s unique visibility and ownership
- Promote home ownership
- Variety of shops and restaurant will create uniqueness
- Relocate MARC train station to prevent traffic jams
- Latino community drives activity
- Buildings tall enough to be seen along Frederick Ave. 16 Stories would be too tall
- Create mix people-attracting uses like a Barnes and Noble, a movie theater, shops, and restaurants—create a “life style”
- Provide medium to upper income housing
- Leverage rail station for new housing opportunities
- Enhance the commercial core with uses that bring people to downtown

SECTOR 2

- The plaza needs to be framed with buildings
- How do you integrate the light industrial uses to the east?
- The existing back drop to the band shell is not an attractive edge
- Post Office is a plus for downtown—location may not be ideal given its location
- Noise from trains is a constraint for residential development
- Gas Station—probably not the best fit—but doing well
- General concern about density of new development
- City Hall expansion, probably not in next 10 years
- Library, book mobile in rail cars
- Increase awareness of existing Farmer’s market

SECTOR 3

- Proposed residential development should promote home ownership
- Commuter parking needs have been satisfied
- Traffic concerns about new development
- Create an additional pedestrian bridge over tracks
- What about one way traffic during rush hour along Summit Avenue?
- Law enforcement concern behind multi-family development north of the schools
- Development / architecture that is unique to “Olde Towne”
- Character of adjacent development will influence marketability of Condo units
- Widen sidewalks and along East Diamond Avenue
- Leverage new roads on Teacher’s Way for future Development

SECTOR 4

- Provide one story artist building with small retailers
- More infill on East Diamond Avenue
- Make Verizon access road more pedestrian friendly
- Bring more density to the City
- Maintain historic charm
- Encourage more development and Revitalization on north side of tracks
- Design code should preserve architectural quality
- Area between Frederick Avenue and East Diamond Avenue as Development Gateway
- Access creates opportunities
- Maintenance problems with arcades along East Diamond Avenue
- Some storefronts restrict pedestrian movement along East Diamond Avenue
- MARC trains tend to be 5 cars and 2 locomotives in length

SECTOR 5

- Implement trail and park improvements
- Remove fences between multi-family development
- Improve school recreational facilities and roadway connections
- Create live/work Units
- Relocate the Post Office

COMMUNITY REVIEW OF CONCEPTS

- Create more hiking/biking trails through Olde Towne and along rail
- Like this Heritage District idea with townhouses in back
- Would like a new building at Verizon sites
- Can have tunnel walkways to connect new development with George Street. A change in landscape will facilitate that. Otherwise, have connections on the ramp to 355.
- An 8 to 12 story building here would be entirely out of scale for the immediate area. A 6 story building might be more acceptable here.
- Thumbs up for the plaza concept and the steps overpass
- Provide pedestrian-friendly access to Bohrer Park
- This garage will be unnecessary for a long time and would have a detrimental effect on the residences on both sides of Summit Avenue. Who would it serve in the immediate future? Move it to front on Olde Towne Avenue if build at all.
- Could you put an entrance to a store, office or residence on the landings of the Spanish Steps?
- Love the landscape plaza but need to give more space and presence to the Railroad and train cars.
- Like the hardscape plaza with perimeter shops and restaurants
- Has a skating rink been considered for the plaza?
- Please no more self-storage units
- No vehicular bridge over tracks to connect to Dogwood Drive
- No connections to Woodland Road. It will harm our community.
- No pedestrian bridge at Dogwood Drive.
- A road in the middle of the park behind City Hall would create unnecessary traffic through the neighborhood. Kids and families would not be able to play softball, frisbee, or soccer. Also, St. Martin’s School uses that park for outside gym classes. It would totally ruin the park.
- The road through the park would be overly detrimental to the neighborhood without providing much benefit.
- How about creating a historic hiker/biker trail in Gaithersburg, MD like those in Annapolis and Washington, DC or Charlottesville, VA?
- Do not build a parking garage next to 20 South Summit Avenue. It would be an unwarranted offense to the adjacent residential neighborhood.
- The office building at Frederick and Brookes Avenues is a good idea
- Completing the access road between Diamond and Brookes Avenues is a great idea.
- We need those hiking/biking trails
- We support the rails with trails concept regardless of the plan. It could be more interpretive in the downtown area. Connect with established trail
- We love the clock tower – hooray!
- The proposed town homes and improved entrance from the north works
- What will happen to the present clock which is a memorial for Mayor Katz’s father?
- Where is our old locomotive and caboose?
- No high rise here! How many trips are you creating? 270 units is a lot.
- Redevelop the Post Office site. Move into a storefront.
- I like the low density housing condominium approach with the Heritage District town homes
- Develop the Teacher’s Way connection to Summit Avenue
- I like the idea of a connector road from Bohrer Park to Dogwood Drive to Olde Towne.
- No bridge of any kind across tracks at Dogwood Drive
- How will state regional storm water management regulations be met on either plan?

COMMUNITY INPUT

Community input created the foundation for the development of the Preferred Draft Plan for Olde Towne.

Throughout the Planning Charrette city residents, merchants, property owners, and government officials were provided many opportunities to offer their thoughts and long term goals for the future of Olde Towne. These comments were carefully documented. Each was considered with the best interest of Olde Towne and the City as a whole in mind.

Shown at left is a listing of opportunities identified during stakeholder discussion groups for each of the planning sectors. This input was distilled into several themes that guided the development of the Master Plan shown on page 18. The themes are shown at right.

Also shown at left (below) is a summary of comments received during a “Work-in-Progress review of development concepts presented November 13, 2004.

- **Create a place for living, working, shopping, and entertaining**
- **Encourage a lively, safe, and diverse community**
- **Preserve historic character**
- **Express Olde Towne’s railroad heritage**
- **Offer a wide-range of housing types**
- **Increase the customer base of Olde Towne businesses**
- **Create a distinct identity—an appealing environment**
- **Leverage the MARC train station**
- **Encourage pedestrian friendliness**
- **Provide a place for people of all ages**
- **Create places for people to gather and interact**
- **Integrate adjacent neighborhoods**



Olde Towne benefits from high visibility and access to major transportation corridors. Olde Towne enjoys direct access to Frederick Avenue, shown here.



Scheduled events at the newly constructed Pavilion attract residents and visitors to Olde Towne.



One of Olde Towne's leading strengths is its access to passenger rail service.



Recent office, residential, and mixed-use development in Olde Towne is indication of a revitalizing downtown.



Olde Towne's historic architecture contributes to its special charm.

EXISTING PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

Understanding existing physical conditions—strengths, constraints, and opportunities—is critical to establish a realistic future for Olde Towne.

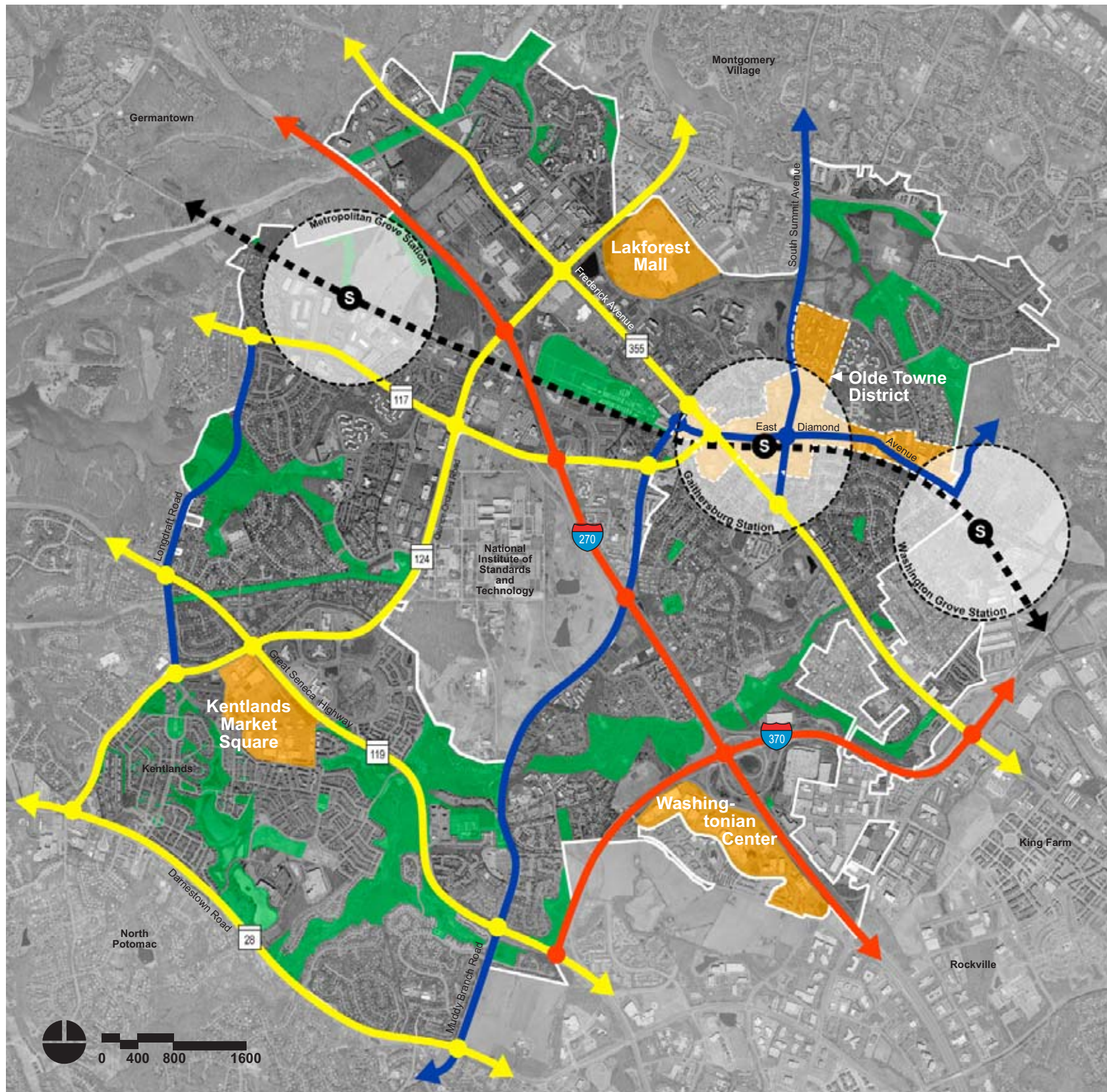
Prior to the Planning Charrette, the consultant team prepared an inventory of land uses and other existing physical conditions that analyze the strengths, opportunities, and constraints within Olde Towne. This information was presented at the Planning Charrette kick-off presentation made on November 10, 2004 and was on constant display during the entire event to test the accuracy of the information and the consultant team's understanding of the City's opportunities and constraints.

A summary of this analysis is offered on the following pages. It includes:

- City Context and Transportation Network—a review of the City's transportation corridors, highway hierarchy, and relationship to designated City Master Plan Town Centers
- City Land Use—a review of the City's land uses and their potential impact on Olde Towne
- Existing Olde Towne Land Use—a detailed

examination of Olde Towne's existing vibrant mix of uses

- Existing Olde Towne Roadway Connectivity—an analysis of Olde Towne's interconnected network of streets and street hierarchy
- Scale Comparisons—a comparison of Olde Towne's scale to other familiar places
- Olde Towne Strengths—a review of Olde Towne's positive elements that could be leveraged for future development and revitalization
- Olde Towne Constraints—an analysis of constraints to overcome
- Olde Towne Opportunities—using the analysis of existing conditions, strengths and constraints, opportunities for Olde Towne improvements are identified.



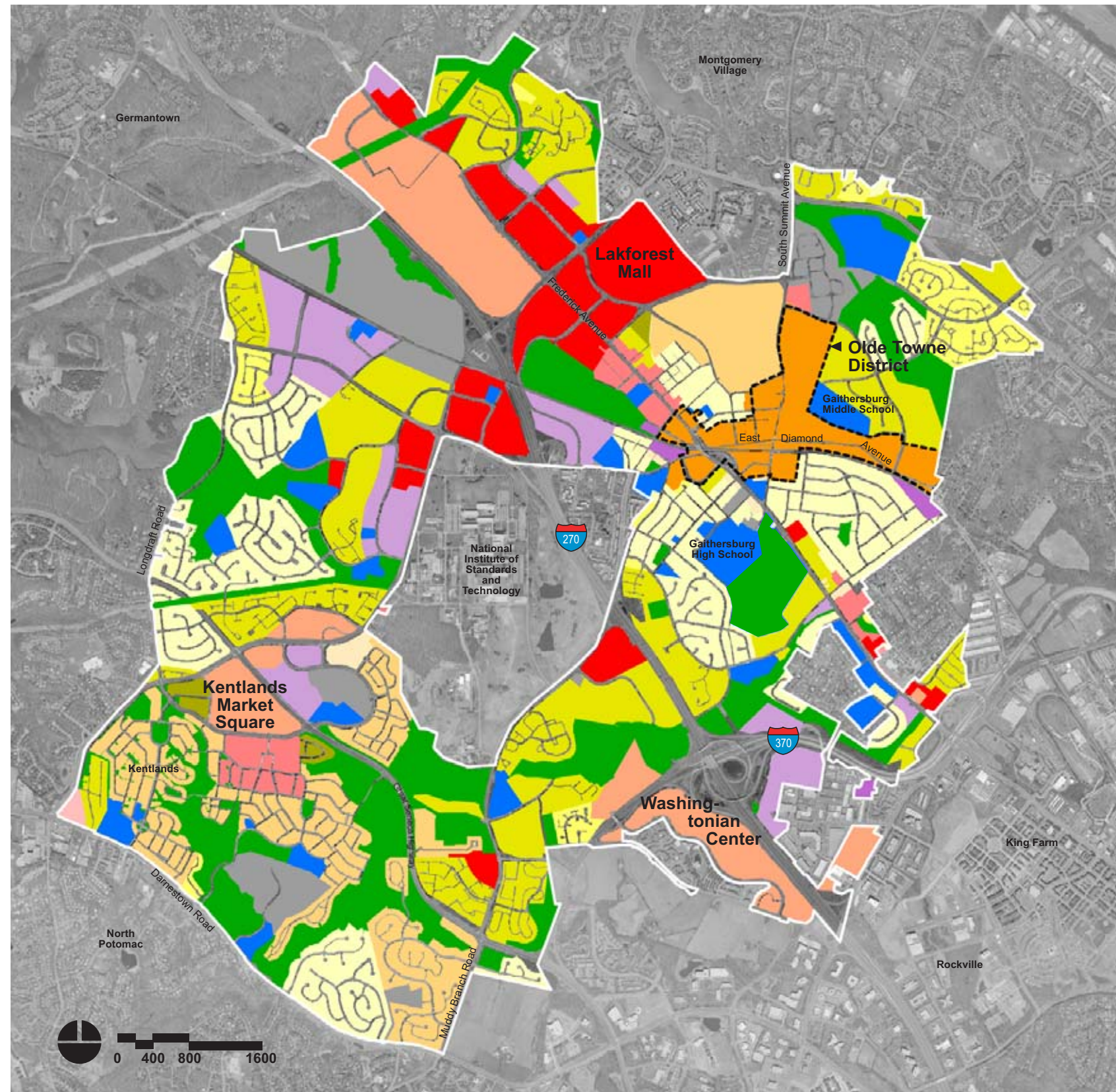
- Interstate Highway
- State Highway
- County Road
- CSX/MARC/AMTRAK
- MARC Train Station and 10 Minute Walking Radius
- Town Center
- Open Space Network

CITY CONTEXT AND TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The City of Gaithersburg Master Plan Land Use Element, adopted in 2003, defines four Town Centers within the City. The Olde Towne District is one of these four Town Centers. Each Town Center is served by an extensive transportation network consisting of interstate highways, Maryland State highways, Montgomery County roads, and/or passenger rail service with easy commutes to other employment centers in the Washington, DC region.

Though Olde Towne is not served by direct access to I-270, it does benefit from access to State Rt. 355 (Frederick Avenue), County roads (South Summit Avenue and Diamond Avenue) and passenger rail service. Olde Towne is the only Town Center with direct access to passenger rail service. The opportunities presented by the presence of the Gaithersburg Train Station in Olde Towne can not be understated.

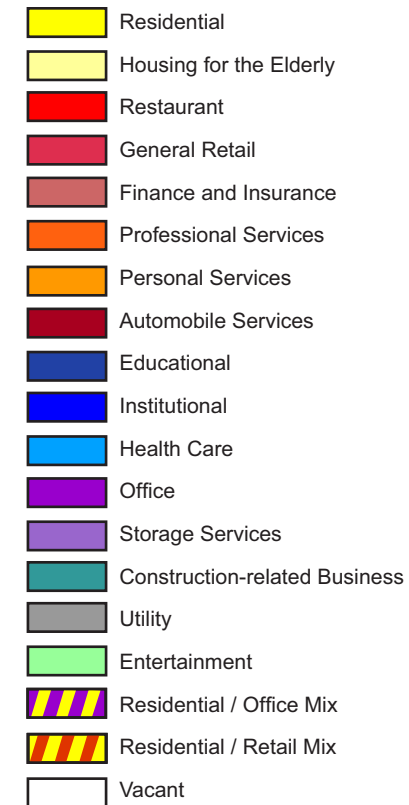
The City's open space network is shown to understand the potential hiker/biker trail development opportunities such networks typically provide. When implemented, hiker/ biker trails create a valuable addition to a City's transportation network.



- Low Density Residential
- Medium-Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Commercial
- Commercial Office
- Commercial-Industrial-Research-Office
- Commercial-Office-Residential
- Industrial
- Residential Office
- Mixed Use
- Institutional
- Open Space
- Refer to Master Plan

CITY LAND USE

It is important to understand the type, quality, and quantity of adjacent land uses that may impact or influence development opportunities in Olde Towne. As shown on the City Land Use diagram, Olde Towne is a mixed-use area with adjacent residential uses. Educational facilities, including the Gaithersburg Middle School at the northeast and the Gaithersburg High School to the south, are close by. The Gaithersburg Elementary School is within the Olde Towne District boundary. A major commercial area consisting of the Lakeforest Mall and other adjacent shopping centers is just to the northwest along Frederick Avenue. Olde Towne is in close proximity to Gaithersburg's larger open spaces and recreational opportunities.

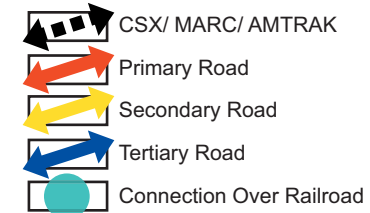
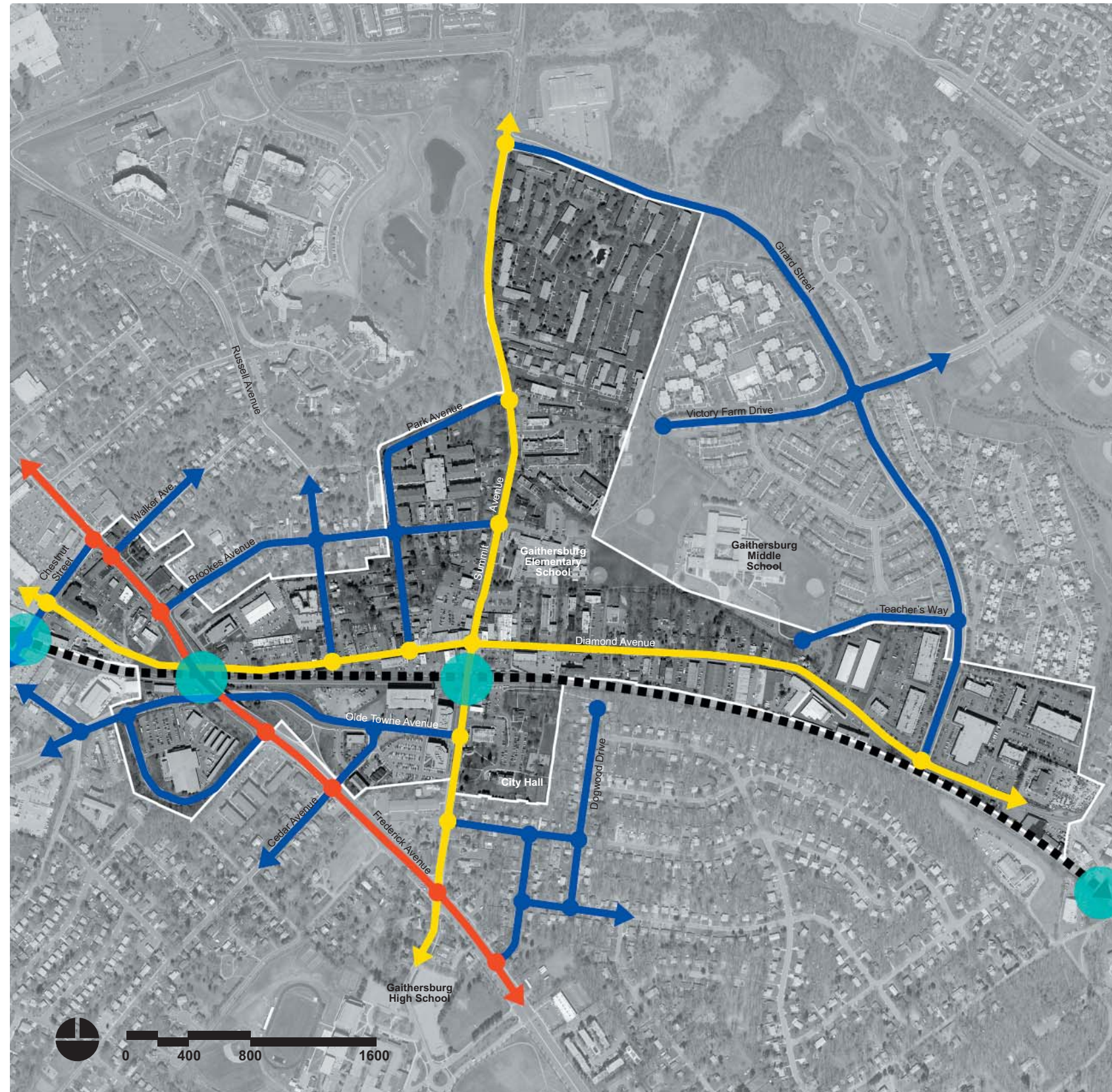


EXISTING OLDE TOWNE LAND USE

A mix of uses exist in Olde Towne. Shops, offices, residences, and civic institutions create the mix of uses characteristic of a vibrant downtown. Commercial uses are located primarily along the length of Diamond Avenue and along Summit Avenue between the railroad tracks and Park Avenue. Commercial and retail uses vary, but are generally neighborhood in scale and service. Small retail shops, restaurants, small office uses, and personal services are interspersed with automobile-oriented commercial services.

Residential uses are located primarily at Olde Towne's north. Large multi-family apartment buildings along Summit Avenue, north of Brookes Avenue have created affordable housing opportunities for Gaithersburg's residents. Though predominantly multi-family, the housing stock includes a number of older, single-family homes. Increasingly, these homes are being converted to small professional office uses, such as medical and legal services.

City Hall and several other civic institutions are clustered together in an area east of South Summit Avenue and south of the railroad tracks. The close proximity of civic uses like City Hall, the Gaithersburg Historical Museum, and the Concert Pavilion create a very definitive civic core in Olde Towne.



EXISTING OLDE TOWNE ROADWAY CONNECTIVITY

Frederick Avenue (State Rt. 355) is the primary roadway servicing Olde Towne. The most visible, direct access into Olde Towne from Frederick Avenue is along Summit Avenue. Additional access from Frederick Avenue can be navigated on Olde Towne's west side along Brookes Avenue, and Fulks Corner Avenue. These routes are confusing and poorly signed, not as direct, and/or take motorists through residential neighborhoods. Additional direct access to Olde Towne is found along Diamond Avenue from the east and west, along Summit Avenue from the north, and Olde Towne Avenue from the west. These three streets are the primary routes through Olde Towne.

The diagram clearly illustrates an interconnected network of streets west of Summit Avenue. Similar connections are lacking on the east side of Summit Avenue. This lack of roadway connectivity forces Summit and Diamond Avenues to bear most of the traffic flowing through Olde Towne. The problem is further enhanced by the lack of crossings over the railroad tracks. Heavy use of the rail corridor by MARC, CSX, and AMTRAK trains creates traffic congestion along Summit Avenue when trains are present.



SCALE COMPARISONS

Understanding the scale of Olde Towne is an important aspect of understanding the magnitude of development and improvement opportunities. The series of diagrams shown at left illustrate the Olde Towne Central Business District boundary (red outline) superimposed—at the same scale—over four unique places.

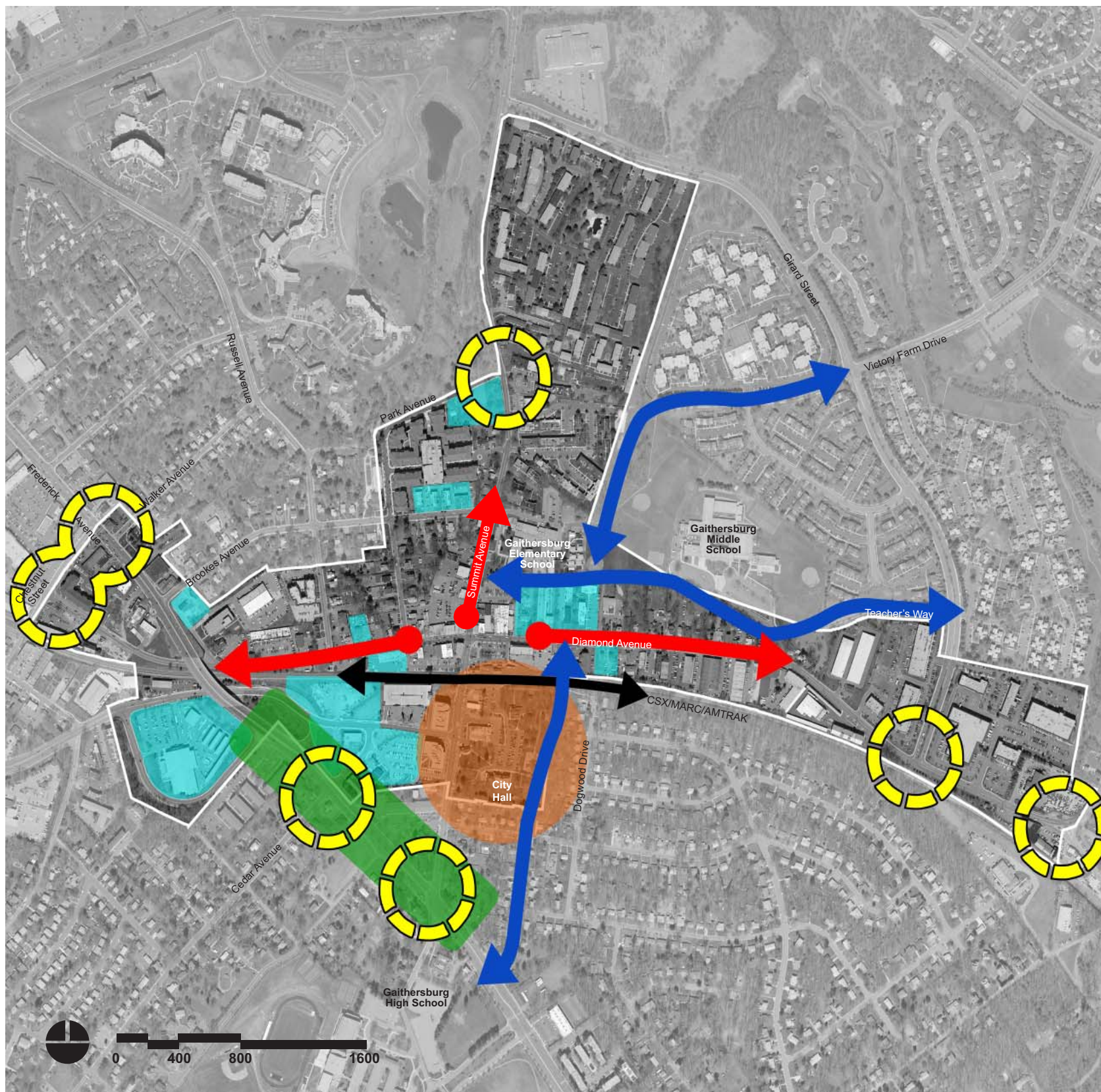


- New Development
- Historic District
- Connection Over Rail Road
- Art, Civic and Cultural Resource
- Gateway
- S

 Gaithersburg Train Station
- Olde Towne Street of Distinct Character
- CSX/ MARC/ AMTRAK

OLDE TOWNE STRENGTHS

The Olde Towne District possesses many existing strengths, including prime access to Interstate highway corridors, access to regional commuter rail service, a branch campus of Montgomery College, recent development interest, civic and cultural resources, successful ethnic local businesses, historic architecture, and a historic “Main Street” – all important assets that Olde Towne can leverage to solidify its continued growth and revitalization.



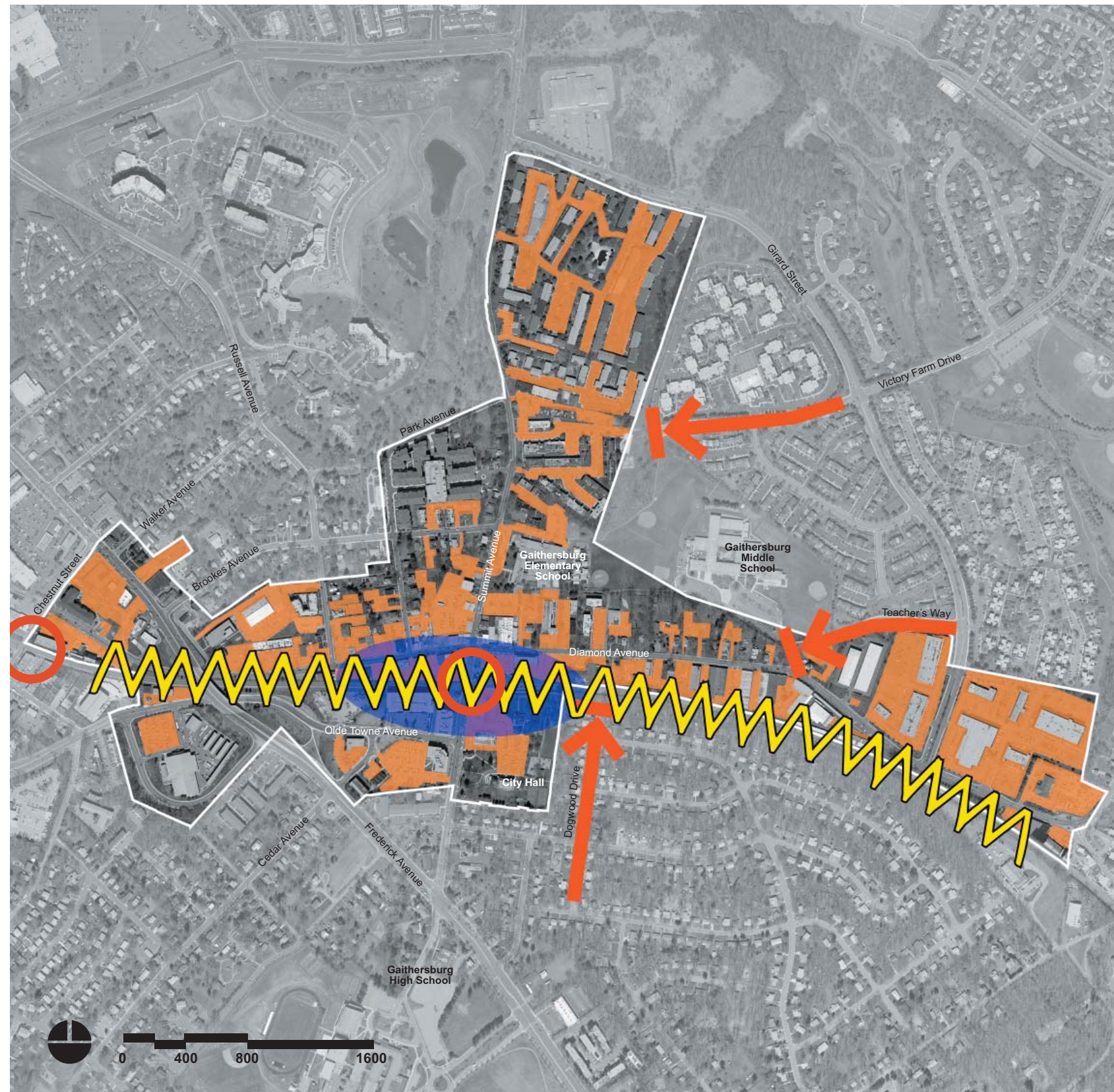
- Enhanced Civic Core
- Underutilized Parcels
- Embrace of Frederick Avenue
- Enhanced Gateways
- Enhance Existing Historic Character
- Possible Roadway Connections
- Improvement of Pedestrian Connections

OLDE TOWNE OPPORTUNITIES

Using the analysis of existing conditions, strengths, and constraints, opportunities for Olde Towne improvements are identified. Development opportunities are perhaps the most significant of these. Development opportunities are identified as undeveloped or underutilized land, City-owned property, or recent developer parcel assemblage.

Improved gateways will increase both the visibility and access to Olde Towne. This visibility could be further enhanced by “embracing” Frederick Avenue with new development of a higher density on both sides of the street. The historic charm and retail activity of Olde Towne could be enhanced by extending the historic commercial core (the intersection of Summit and Diamond Avenues) along Diamond Avenue to the west and east and Summit Avenue to the north. The historic character could be further enhanced in the design of new construction. The park-like setting of the civic core, defined by City Hall and various other civic uses found east of Summit Avenue and south of the railroad tracks, could be enhanced and preserved as the heart of Gaithersburg’s civic life.

Diamond and Summit Avenues are the only streets that cross Olde Towne. Additional street connections would improve traffic flow through the entire Olde Towne Central Business District and reduce the traffic burden these streets currently carry. A new street connection with an unencumbered rail crossing that parallels Summit Avenue, as well as the extensions of Victory Farm Drive and Teacher’s Way would greatly improve vehicular traffic through Olde Towne.



- Surface Parking
- Unwelcoming View
- ➔ No Through Connections
- ⚡ Barrier at Rail Road
- At-Grade Railroad Crossings

OLDE TOWNE CONSTRAINTS

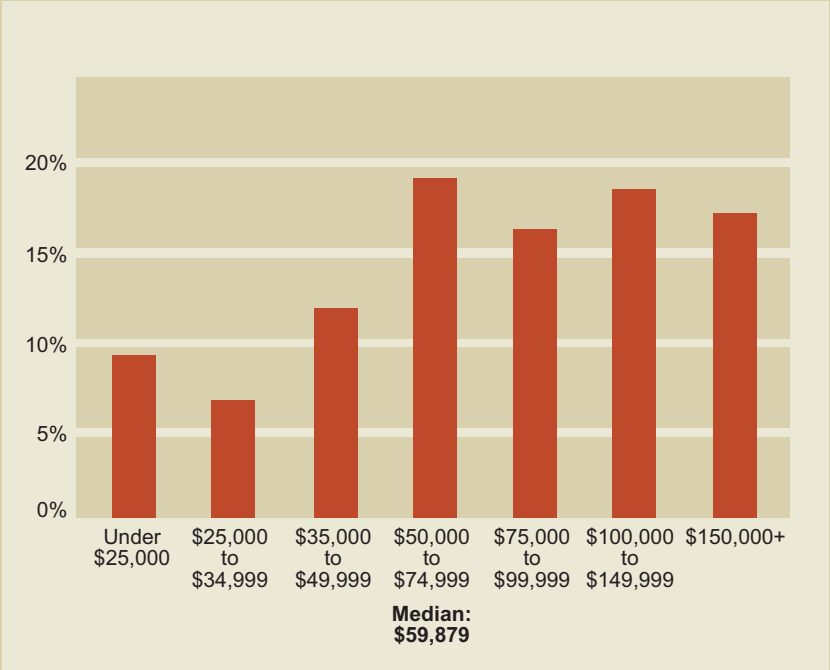
Though a public parking garage has been constructed in recent years, a large amount of unconsolidated surface parking still remains. The presence of surface parking, particularly along the railroad tracks near the intersection of Diamond and Summit Avenues, has created an unwelcoming view at the main approach into Olde Towne along Summit Avenue.

The railroad tracks are a substantial physical barrier through the Olde Towne District. This barrier separates the commercial core and large residential areas north of the tracks from the civic core and development opportunities to the south. With only four vehicular crossings over the tracks—two of which are at-grade crossings—substantial traffic congestion occurs when trains are present. An additional constraint associated with the railroad tracks is the noise and vibration from passing trains.

As described in the Existing Olde Towne Roadway Connectivity diagram shown on page 12, several uncompleted roadways limit access to Olde Towne. These include Victory Farm Drive, Teacher's Way, and Dogwood Drive.

FACTOR	GRADE	ASSESSMENT
Regional Location	A-	Inner suburban, infill location in a fast-growing region with significant land supply constraints in closer-in areas
Demographics & Economics	B+	Lack of luxury housing stock in Olde Towne, but very strong demographic and economic foundation in surrounding market area
Access & Visibility	B	Strong infill location with transportation anchor; visibility and access challenges can be overcome through effective planning and marketing
Development Opportunities	A-	Some fractional ownership constraints, but overall several concentrations of parcels that can be redeveloped in the long term
Character	B+	Charming but underutilized “Main Street”, ethnic character and public spaces already provide a unique small downtown experience

An assessment of Olde Towne’s locational advantages. Logically, the higher the grade the better the assessment (source: Robert Charles Lesser & Company, LLC).



The City of Gaithersburg’s relatively high household income indicates a strong local economy (source: US Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Census 1990-2000).

USE	OPPORTUNITY	DEPTH OF DEMAND
Residential	HIGH	1,250 to 1,500 Units
Retail	MODERATE	125,000 to 175,000 square feet
Office	MODERATE	200,000 to 250,000 square feet
Hotel	LOW	Boutique hotel in long-term

This chart indicates new development depth of demand projections for a variety of land use types in Olde Towne over an 8 to 10 year period (source: Robert Charles Lesser & Company, LLC).

EXISTING MARKET CONDITIONS

Existing market conditions indicate the type and intensity of development that can occur in Olde Towne.

This section has been adapted from a more extensive report prepared by Robert Charles Lesser & Co. LLC. The full report, *Market Analysis of Selected Land Uses in Olde Towne Gaithersburg, MD, February 10, 2005*, is available from the Planning and Code Administration Office at City Hall.

The strength of future development opportunities in Olde Towne will depend primarily on two factors:

- The strength of Olde Towne as a location for a variety of land uses, and
- The supply and demand conditions for those land uses in Olde Towne's competitive market area.

Shown at left is an assessment of Olde Towne's locational advantages. Olde Towne should be well positioned to capture a significant depth of demand to support a relatively small, but vibrant mixed-use downtown.

Also shown at left is an analysis of market conditions that indicates the depth of demand for a variety of potential land uses in Olde Towne. The demand projections reflect new development potential over the next 8 to 10 year period. Clearly, there exists high demand for new residential development and a moderate demand for retail and office development.

In the near term, for-sale condominium development will represent the more attractive residential development option from market demand and land value perspectives. New condominiums should be able to achieve pricing of \$350 per square foot, with significant price increasing over time as the Olde Towne redevelopment gains momentum. The target market for these condominiums will be young and mid-career professionals, empty nesters, retirees and smaller families. Over the next decade, luxury rental apartment development opportunities may increase as interest rates rise and undersupply conditions are created

due to the current slowdown in development of this product type.

Attracting new residential development is a critical step in the continued revitalization of Olde Towne. Future residents would contribute to the twenty-four hour vibrancy of Olde Towne and help support retail uses. There is an opportunity to develop new retail in Olde Towne as well as strengthen the existing retail base. The traditional downtown character of Olde Towne (the "Main Street" character of Diamond Avenue for example) offers an alternative to typical suburban strip shopping centers and even newly developed town centers.

The recent success of the class 'A' office buildings indicate the potential success of future office development. New office development in Olde Towne could target office users that want to work in a unique, mixed-use environment. New office development would create daytime traffic that supports retail uses.

There is limited near- and mid-term opportunity to develop a hotel in Olde Towne, although the development of a boutique hotel or other type that fills a specific niche may exist in the longer term. Due to the tenuous nature of potential hotel development, a hotel site has not been shown on the Master Plan .

BUILDING LEGEND

- Existing Building 
- Proposed Building 
- Existing Civic Building 
- Existing Parking Structure 
- Proposed Parking Structure 



THE MASTER PLAN

The Plan is the physical manifestation of the community's hopes and desires for the long-term development of Olde Towne. It provides a glimpse into the future.

The Master Plan (left) embodies the main themes, ideas, and recommendations developed at the Planning Charrette. Generated from an extensive analysis of Olde Towne's strengths, constraints, opportunities, and input from the community; the plan highlights areas for new development and improvement over the next 5 to 10 years and beyond.

The recommendations established by the Master Plan include:

- new development that capitalizes upon City-owned property,
- consolidating the parking supply
- strengthening Olde Towne as a vibrant destination and the heart of civic life;
- improvements to the public realm, including new parks, plazas and cultural resources;
- new pedestrian and vehicular connections that improve circulation and wayfinding,
- provide alternative modes of

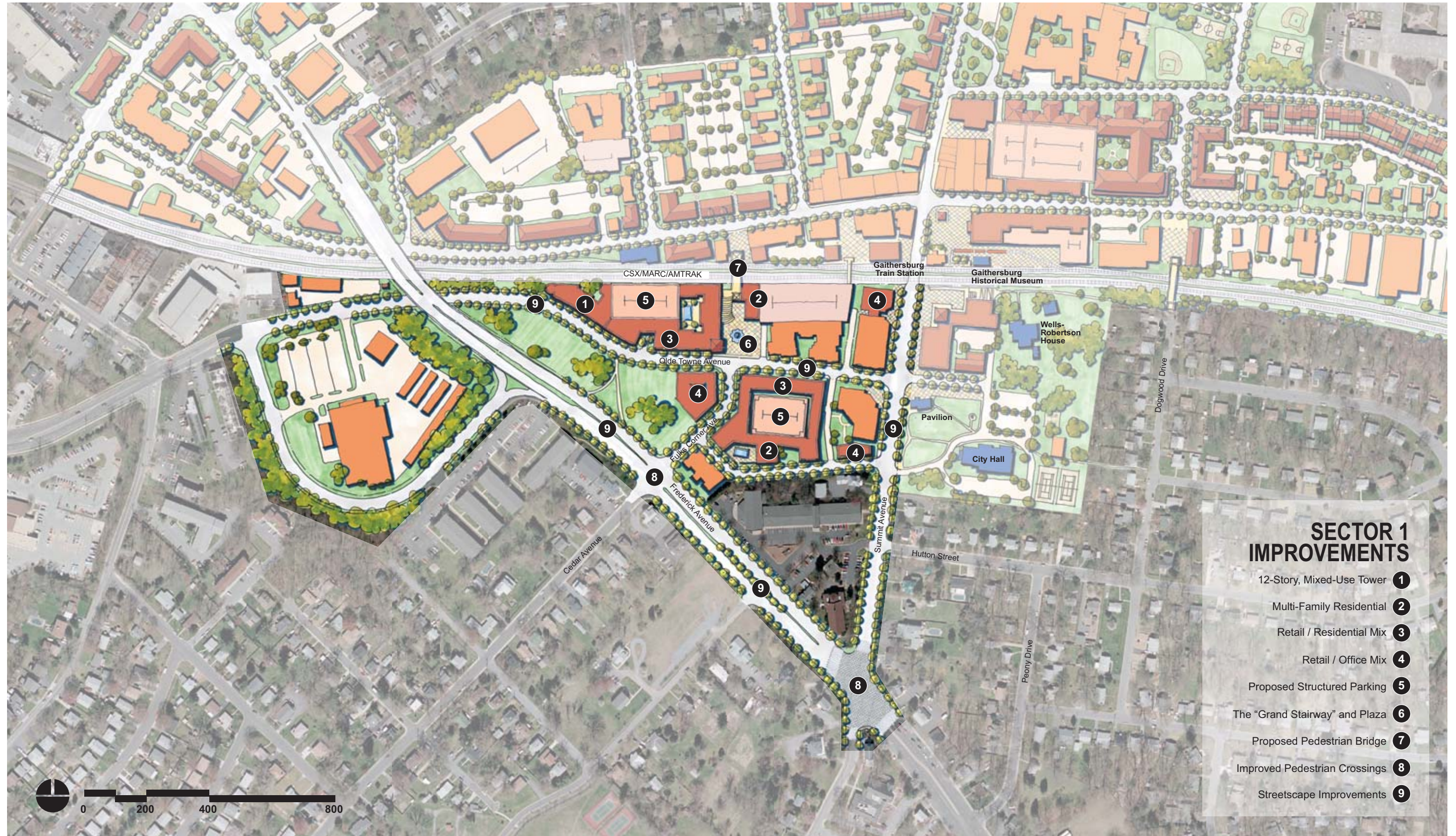
transportation that link and help alleviate traffic congestion.

To strengthen the desirability of Olde Towne as a regional destination, the Plan recommends a significant increase in development density. As indicated on the Plan, new buildings are illustrated in a darker brown color, while existing buildings are illustrated in a lighter brown color. Though density has been increased, Olde Towne's historic charm, one of its leading assets, remains intact.

New commercial infill development would extend the "Main Street" character of Summit Avenue north to Brookes Avenue, and Diamond Avenue west to Chestnut Street. New mixed-use residential development would increase home-ownership opportunities, diversify the housing supply, and capitalize upon the proximity of the MARC passenger rail service. Future Olde Towne residents would

contribute to the lively, 24-hour atmosphere and support future retail development; therefore, uses that support late night activity are strongly encouraged.

The next 12 pages describe the Master Plan in greater detail. Pages 21 to 30 illustrate proposed improvements for each of the five planning sectors. Pages 31 to 39 illustrate and define various components of the Master Plan. These include building heights, land use, parking, and the circulation network, and several "before-and-after" illustrations. An implementation strategy is also included.



SECTOR 1

Sector 1 represents the most significant opportunity for redevelopment in Olde Towne. This sector is characterized by a large City-owned, underutilized site (the “Y” site) with visibility from Frederick Avenue and direct access from Fulks Corner Avenue and Summit Avenue. Accessibility to the site is further enhanced from points west by the direct connection to I-270 via Olde Towne Avenue/West Diamond Avenue. Proposed development in Sector 1 leverages this visibility and access, as well as the presence of the MARC rail station to significantly increase Olde Towne’s density while preserving the historic character found along Diamond and Summit Avenues.

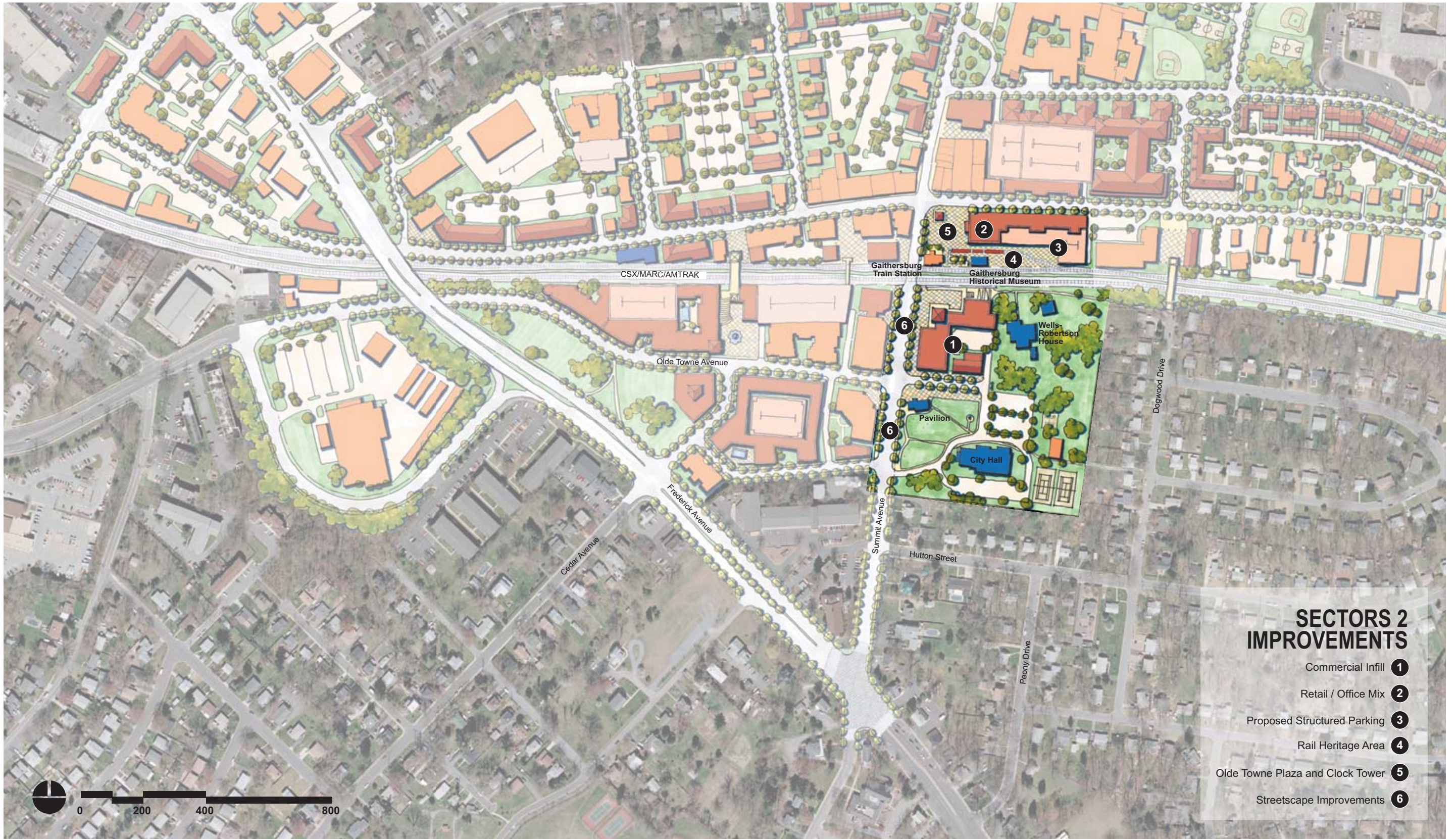
Proposed buildings in this area should complement the character of development already established by the recent construction of the class “A” office, luxury apartments, and public parking structures. Ground floor retail uses fronting Olde Towne Avenue and residential or office uses on the upper floors are proposed in buildings up to five stories in height.

One building on the “Y” site is proposed to reach up to 12 stories in height to become a recognizable Olde Towne landmark. Constructed against the railroad tracks, this building would be an exciting residential or office address. Adequate soundproofing measures to temper the noise from passing trains would need to be considered in construction. Parking for these uses would be accommodated in parking structures located behind the buildings. Market forces will dictate the specific mix of uses to occur in each building, though a restaurant use should

be encouraged in the ground level of the proposed building at Summit Avenue next to the railroad tracks.

A key feature of Sector 1 is the proposed “grand stairway” and plaza. This plaza space and “grand stairway” would serve as an additional gathering space for residents, providing access to the pedestrian bridge over the tracks and seating to relax and enjoy a cup of coffee. The “Y” site’s rail history could be reflected in the final design of this plaza space.

As the largest contiguous development opportunity in Olde Towne, quality of design and construction must be of the highest standards. A sketch that conceptually illustrates the desired architectural character of this development and the “grand stairway” and plaza is shown on page 38.



SECTORS 2 IMPROVEMENTS

- Commercial Infill **1**
- Retail / Office Mix **2**
- Proposed Structured Parking **3**
- Rail Heritage Area **4**
- Olde Towne Plaza and Clock Tower **5**
- Streetscape Improvements **6**

SECTOR 2

Much of Sector 2 (located east of Summit Avenue and south of Diamond Avenue) is proposed to remain in its existing condition. City Hall, the Concert Pavilion, Wells Robertson House, the Gaithersburg Historical Museum, and the historic train station, are valued civic resources that together define a civic core for the City of Gaithersburg and contribute to the existing and future vitality of Olde Towne. Several development and improvement opportunities are proposed, however, that reinforce the Sector’s role as the civic heart of the City by integrating existing uses, enhancing the visual character, and improving the public realm.

Olde Towne Plaza and Clock Tower

The surface parking at the southeast corner of Summit and Diamond Avenues, Olde Towne’s most prominent and visible intersection, would be replaced by an expanded plaza area. Designed to integrate the historic steam locomotive, rail cars, the Gaithersburg Historical Museum, and the historic train station into a cohesive space, the plaza would become a more appropriate setting to celebrate Olde Towne’s rail heritage. A clock tower prominently located at the corner, punctuates the plaza space and serves as a recognizable Olde Towne landmark. Special features, like synchronized lighting or chimes, could be incorporated into the design of the tower to announce a train’s imminent arrival. Other elements or programmed features such as street vendors, chess tables, fairs, and festivals would reinforce the plaza’s function as the locus of downtown life and activity.

315 East Diamond Avenue

The proposed redevelopment of the Fishman Building (315 East Diamond Avenue) would bound Olde Towne Plaza’s east side. Capitalizing on the high visibility afforded by its proximity to the MARC rail station and the intersection of Summit and Diamond Avenues, this City-owned property could be redeveloped to a higher density, mixed-use facility. To enhance the use of Olde Towne Plaza, ground floor retail uses like restaurants, cafes, flower shops, or even a small grocery that caters to commuters could be located adjacent to the space. Additional retail uses could front along Diamond Avenue to extend its “Main Street” character eastward. The upper floors could accommodate additional office uses. Parking for these uses would be provided in a small parking structure located between the railroad tracks and the back of the building. The lower level of the garage could provide public parking spaces, while the upper level(s) could be reserved for office users and retail employees. The footprint of the parking structure should accommodate the existing historic rail cars and the tracks on which they sit.

High visibility and City-ownership should allow the site to redevelop in early stages of Master Plan implementation. Quality of design and construction must be of the highest standard to respect Olde Towne’s historic character and architectural heritage. A sketch that conceptually illustrates the desired architectural character of this building and its relationship to Olde Towne Plaza is shown on page 37.

The US Postal Service and Gas Station Sites

Located in the heart of Olde Towne next to the MARC rail station, the distribution facility of the United States Postal Service (USPS) and the Shell gas station are inappropriate and underutilized uses for the highly visible and accessible sites they occupy. The auto-orientation of these uses creates an unsightly, incompatible environment for both the pedestrian and adjacent civic facilities.

The short-term development proposed in Sector 1 (see page 22) would likely provide further visibility for the redevelopment of the USPS and Shell sites in the mid- to long-term. This new facility is envisioned as either a single-story building of retail uses like restaurants, cafes, and shops; or up to a three-story, mixed-use building of ground floor retail with office above. Built to the edge of the street, the character of this new structure and its proposed uses would reflect that of the recent office development found across the street, serve as a more appropriate backdrop for the Concert Pavilion, and create the desired pedestrian-orientation appropriate for the heart of Olde Towne. A small plaza space adjacent to the railroad tracks would provide space for café tables, as well as an unobstructed view from the south to the historic train station and steam locomotive.

The extension of Olde Towne Avenue into Sector 2 would provide more direct access from the west as well as generally improve vehicular circulation south of the railroad tracks. The surface parking this proposed building would displace could

be accommodated in structured parking facilities proposed throughout Olde Towne or located on the south side of City Hall.





SECTOR 3

Sector 3 is characterized by a wide variety of land uses including vibrant retail, two public schools, an area of historic architecture, and a large area of light industrial uses. Sector 3 transitions quickly from the light industrial uses on the east side to Olde Towne’s retail core at the intersection of Summit and Diamond Avenues – the heart of Olde Towne life and activity. Recommendations that address and improve the relationship among these seemingly disparate uses are proposed below.

Existing Light Industrial Facilities

Many auto repair and light industrial facilities are located on the east side of this Sector. These uses provide valuable services to Gaithersburg residents and are proposed to remain in their existing condition. Several members of the community suggested a commercial entertainment facility or music/dance hall that would host live music events (like the Birchmere in Alexandria, VA). The light industrial buildings in Sector 3 would adapt well to these entertainment uses. Though a specific location for a music hall facility is not shown, an entertainment use would be an appropriate redevelopment opportunity.

Special landscaping and welcome and directional signage at the termini of Girard Street and Railroad Street would improve these prominent gateways into Olde Towne for visitors arriving from the east.

Northeast Corner of Diamond Avenue

Recent developer interest in this area of Olde Towne suggests likely change in the short-term. To realize the maximum de-

velopment potential of this large parcel assemblage (the largest outside of Sector 1), buildings could achieve a height of five stories in mixed-use structures. The “Proposed Building Heights” plan on page 31 illustrates in detail the proposed heights for buildings in this complex. Ground floor retail uses would extend the pedestrian-friendly, “Main Street” character of Diamond Avenue eastward. Residential uses, both above the retail and in separate structures, would provide exciting class “A” condominium living in the heart of Olde Towne. Structured parking for this mixed-use project would be provided by an integrated facility.

A separate building proposed along Summit Avenue, next to the Gaithersburg Elementary School, could accommodate ground floor retail uses with a small amount of office uses on the upper floors. To ensure that the historic character of Olde Towne remains intact, this new building should maintain and respect the existing retail located at the northeast corner of Summit and Diamond Avenues.

Parking for this building could be accommodated in the parking structure located within the adjacent mixed-use project. The first level of the parking garage would be reserved for public parking and accommodate the retail uses located in this part of Olde Towne. The upper levels would be reserved for adjacent residential uses.

Olde Towne Heritage Area

Several residential structures along the north side of Diamond Avenue are listed in the City’s historic buildings inventory. De-

finied by a proposed Olde Towne Heritage Area, these structures recall the City’s rail and agricultural history and are recommended to remain in their existing condition. Many of these buildings serve as small professional offices—an appropriate use that should be encouraged to buffer the proposed residential development adjacent to the Gaithersburg Middle School (see below) from the light industrial uses south of Diamond Avenue.

Town Home Development

The deep parcels between Diamond Avenue and the Gaithersburg Middle School (the parcels on which many of the historic structures sit - see Olde Towne Heritage Area, above) represent significant mid-term development opportunity. The City should initiate a process that would subdivide, acquire, and assemble these large parcels to facilitate new town home development in this area. Fronting onto the proposed extension of Teacher’s Way (see *Connectivity Improvements*, below), new town homes would diversify Olde Towne’s housing stock and provide home ownership opportunities. The City should consider the extension of Teacher’s Way early in master plan implementation to make this area more attractive for redevelopment.

An additional mixed-use building is also proposed for this area. This structure is envisioned as a three-story building with ground floor retail and office uses on the upper floors. At three stories, this structure would provide an appropriate transition in height and scale from the large, mixed-use development proposed to the west, and

the town homes and Olde Towne Heritage Area proposed to the east. Parking for this facility could be accommodated in a surface lot behind the structure. The construction of this building would displace the Gaithersburg Youth Center, which would be relocated to a site with convenient access to the Gaithersburg Middle School.

Connectivity Improvements

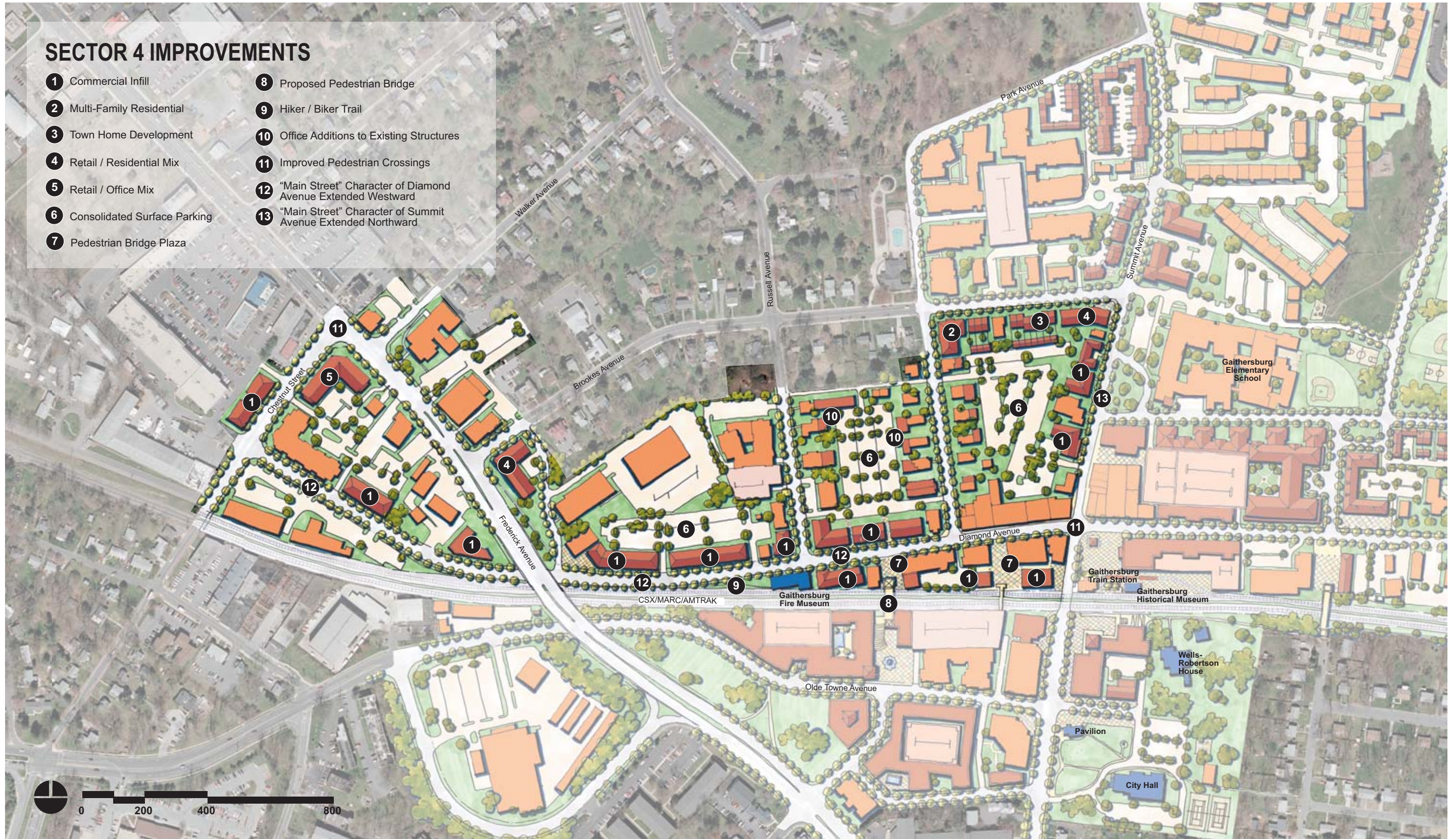
Additional recommendations are proposed in Sector 3 that improve pedestrian and vehicular connectivity within Olde Towne and outlying areas. The extension of Victory Farm Drive would establish a parallel route to Summit Avenue between Diamond Avenue and Girard Street, providing an additional route to the Gaithersburg Elementary and Middle Schools and potentially reducing the traffic burden Summit Avenue now carries. A small neighborhood green that offsets Victory Farm Drive at Teacher’s Way makes the route less direct and would slow the speed of traffic through this area. The extension of Victory Farm Drive is also illustrated in Sector 5 (see page 29). The extension of Teacher’s Way would establish a parallel route to Diamond Avenue between Girard Street and Summit Avenue, potentially reducing the traffic load Diamond Avenue now bears. The extension of Teacher’s Way would also create substantial value to adjacent parcels, increasing the likelihood of their redevelopment in the near- to mid-term. Though it is strongly recommended that Teacher’s Way extend to Summit Avenue, the proposal must be studied in greater detail. A traffic study should be initiated to determine the impact of a new intersection at Summit Avenue, as

well as future right of way acquisition issues with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and private property owners. The design of Teacher’s Way and Victory Farm Drive will incorporate pedestrian safety and traffic calming measures. Following the redevelopment of the northeast corner of Diamond Avenue, a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks located at the terminus of Victory Farm and Dogwood Drives should be studied. This bridge would improve Olde Towne’s pedestrian accessibility for neighborhoods to the southeast and provide a safe alternative route for children on their way to and from school. A small plaza at the base of the pedestrian bridge and a small commercial infill structure complete the ensemble.

A proposed hiker/biker trail that traverses Olde Towne parallel to the railroad tracks would connect many important Olde Towne features, provide a valuable recreational amenity, and improve the quality of life for Olde Towne residents. The trail would connect to the proposed pedestrian bridge so that trail users could continue north on a proposed extension of the trail (see Sector 5, below). The trail could connect to the Gaithersburg and Washington Grove MARC rail stations and to the Shady Grove Metro Station, providing residents an opportunity to walk or bike to catch a train to work. Trail users from outside of the City could learn of Gaithersburg’s history at the History Museum and interpretive signage at Olde Towne Plaza. Bike racks conveniently located in Olde Towne Plaza would encourage bikers to shop and dine in Olde Towne establishments.

SECTOR 4 IMPROVEMENTS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 Commercial Infill | 8 Proposed Pedestrian Bridge |
| 2 Multi-Family Residential | 9 Hiker / Biker Trail |
| 3 Town Home Development | 10 Office Additions to Existing Structures |
| 4 Retail / Residential Mix | 11 Improved Pedestrian Crossings |
| 5 Retail / Office Mix | 12 "Main Street" Character of Diamond Avenue Extended Westward |
| 6 Consolidated Surface Parking | 13 "Main Street" Character of Summit Avenue Extended Northward |
| 7 Pedestrian Bridge Plaza | |



SECTOR 4

Sector 4 is characterized by qualities consistent with a traditional downtown – a variety of vibrant retail and restaurants along a “Main Street”, adjacency to the Brookes Russell Walker Historic District, and convenient, though less direct access and visibility from Frederick Avenue via Chestnut Street. Many infill opportunities are present in Sector 4 that would strengthen the “Main Street” qualities of Diamond and Summit Avenues, allow a densification of adjacent office uses, and introduce new housing opportunities.

Commercial and Residential Infill Opportunities

The greatest opportunities present in Sector 4 are the many commercial infill sites present along Diamond and Summit Avenues. Commercial development constructed to the street edge would fill in the “missing teeth” along these streets, extend their Main Street character north and west, and improve the general pedestrian-friendliness of Olde Towne. Additional restaurants that incorporate sidewalk cafes and retailers that display wares on the sidewalk would increase Olde Towne’s street activity and overall attractiveness to the pedestrian. Infill structures are envisioned up to three stories in height, with ground floor retail uses and residential or office uses above. Market conditions would determine specific uses as sites come on line for redevelopment. The historic charm of Olde Towne is one of its leading assets. Infill development should in final design reflect this colloquial and historic vernacular. Many of the historic homes along Russell

and Park Avenues have been converted to office uses to establish an appropriate buffer between the commercial areas of Olde Towne and the adjacent historic district. Recent developer interest in this area indicates the desire to increase the density. Additions to these structures that respect the historic integrity of the original building and the historic character of this area should be permitted. The additions shown on the illustrative plan at left are provided to illustrate this concept only and do not indicate actual proposals.

Residential infill opportunities exist along Brookes Avenue between Park and Summit Avenues. These narrow parcels are well-suited for small multi-family buildings, town homes, or two-over-two condominiums.

Several retail infill opportunities exist between Diamond Avenue and the railroad tracks. Small retail structures are proposed to flank the proposed plaza spaces at the foot of the existing and proposed pedestrian bridges that cross the railroad tracks. The City should encourage infill development at these sites to replace the unsightly surface parking lots and mask the unsightly rear of existing structures adjacent to the tracks. Retail venues could support cafes, coffee shops, or commuter serving convenience retail uses like small groceries, flower shops, and dry cleaners to animate the plaza spaces and create a more welcoming arrival as pedestrians cross the bridge. The existing surface parking that these structures displace would be

accommodated in consolidated surface lots or parking structures proposed in this Sector and throughout Olde Towne.

Consolidated Surface Parking

Several opportunities to consolidate surface parking for use by the public and private businesses exist in Sector 4. Where feasible, all surface parking should be located in the middle of the block, behind existing and proposed structures. Clear and visible directional signage will direct vehicles to all public surface parking. Direct, well-lit pedestrian ways that connect the surface parking to the street will improve safety at night.

Connectivity and Gateway Improvements

Many of the connectivity improvements proposed in Sector 4 are geared toward the pedestrian. Streetscape improvements of new sidewalk paving, street tree planting, and pedestrian-scaled street lights would reinforce Diamond Avenue’s “Main Street” character and create a pedestrian-friendly environment as they stroll to shop and dine in Olde Towne.

The hiker/biker trail proposed in other Sectors would continue here in a westward direction on the north side of the tracks, potentially connecting neighborhoods lying on the west side of Olde Towne to the district’s commercial center. Residents living on the west side of Olde Towne would have an opportunity to walk or bike to catch a train to work. A portion of the trail west of Summit Avenue could be constructed

as a boardwalk to reflect the boardwalk construction and interpretive features found on the east side of Summit Avenue. Like in Sector 3, the hiker/biker trail would also connect to the existing and proposed pedestrian bridges. Linking Olde Towne across the tracks, these bridges provide a convenient and safe way for pedestrians to cross the railroad tracks and access to the existing parking structure.

The most pronounced Olde Towne gateway in Sector 4 is located at the intersection of Frederick Avenue and Chestnut Street. This area lacks a sense of place and is not welcoming to the pedestrian. New crosswalk or intersection paving, improved traffic signaling, streetscape improvements, and new infill development constructed at the street edge along Chestnut Street would reinforce this intersection as a major gateway into Olde Towne, as well as alert motorists to the presence of pedestrians. New, welcome and directional signage would clearly identify Chestnut Street as the route motorists should take to access Olde Towne from the northwest side of the district.

SECTOR 5 IMPROVEMENTS

- 1 Town Home Development
- 2 Multi-Family Residential
- 3 Proposed Roadway Connection
- 4 Hiker / Biker Trail Connection
- 5 Streetscape Improvements



SECTOR 5

Sector 5 is a large area characterized by multi-family dwellings with a few City-owned, underutilized parcels along Summit Avenue. Much of Sector 5 is proposed to remain in its existing condition for the near future. However, opportunities for new development and redevelopment do exist within the sector.

Residential Development

Several City-owned parcels along the west side of Summit Avenue between Brookes and Park Avenues do offer significant development opportunity in the near-term. The development of these sites into a higher-density residential community of fee-simple town homes and/or two-over-two condominiums (one two-level condominium unit on top of another two-level condominium) would diversify Olde Towne's housing stock and tenure, as well as improve the visual quality and pedestrian environment of the area.

To capitalize on the high visibility of the intersection at Summit and Park Avenues and the large number of residents living in this part of Olde Towne, a small amount of neighborhood-serving retail space could be accommodated in the ground level of one or several of the structures. Known as “flex” space, these structures could be constructed to allow either retail or residential uses on the ground floor – the specific use being determined by existing market conditions.

Parking for the town homes, two-over-two condominiums, and residential uses of the flex buildings would be accommodated in the rear of the structures. On-street parking

along Park Avenue would satisfy the parking needs of the small amount of retail uses proposed for this area.

The sharp contrast between the pastoral landscape of the Asbury Methodist Village on the west side of Summit Avenue and this proposed new residential development would create a pronounced, highly-visible gateway into Olde Towne from the north, requiring the highest standards of architectural design, materials, and construction. A sketch that conceptually illustrates the character of this residential development is shown on page 36.

Additional residential development is proposed on the east side of Summit Avenue, next to the Gaithersburg Elementary School. The existing structures on this site are obsolete, difficult to maintain, and expensive to insure. Redevelopment would greatly improve the quality of the rental housing stock on the east side of Summit Avenue.

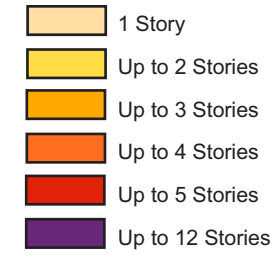
Connectivity Improvements

Additional recommendations are proposed in Sector 5 that improves pedestrian and vehicular connectivity within Olde Towne and outlying areas. An extension of the proposed hiker/biker trail (see Sector 3) could wind its way through the open space behind the apartment buildings on the east side of Sector 5. This leg of the trail would connect Olde Towne to existing and future residential neighborhoods to the north and east, providing school children and commuters a safe place to walk or bike to the Gaithersburg Elementary and Middle

schools and the train station. Part of a greater network, the trail would also provide a valuable recreational amenity for all Gaithersburg residents. To encourage the safety of trail users, the trail should be well-lit and constructed to contemporary, multi-use trail design standards.

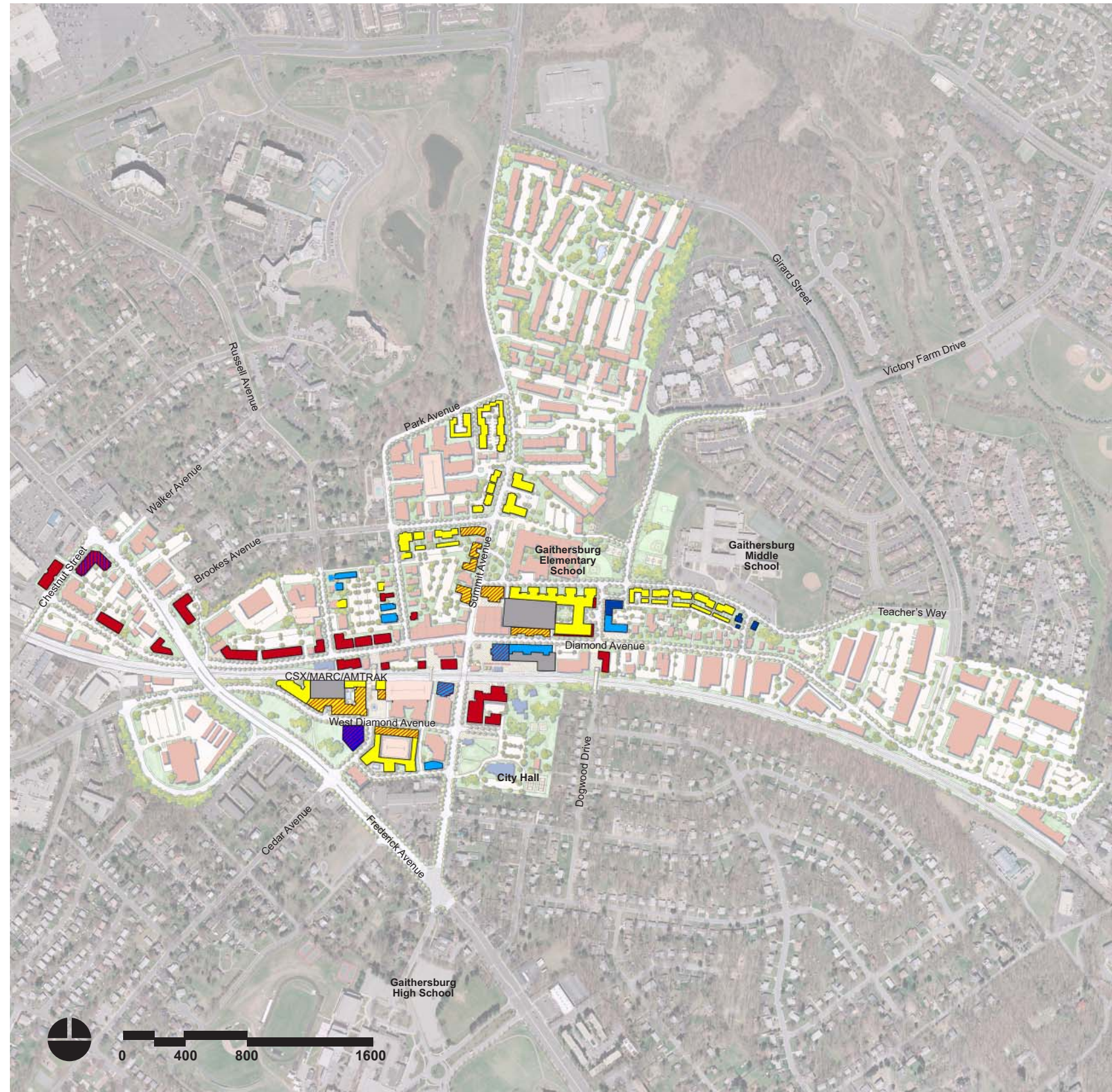
The extension of Victory Farm Drive on the east side of Sector 5 would greatly increase the vehicular accessibility of Olde Towne for adjacent neighborhoods. The extension of Victory Farm Drive is described in greater detail above (see Sector 3).





PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHTS

A variety of building heights is proposed for the Olde Towne District. Logically, taller buildings accommodate more intensive uses. Suitably sized buildings can reinforce “downtown” character and provide visual interest. Consistent with existing Olde Towne character, most buildings are proposed between two to four stories. Taller buildings are proposed at the development opportunity sites along Frederick Avenue and Olde Towne Avenue, as well as along Diamond Avenue east of Summit Avenue. Taller buildings can include three to four story bases with the upper floors set back from the base at least ten feet. A tall 12-story building positioned along Olde Towne Avenue near the MARC rail station would become a recognizable landmark for visitors to Olde Towne.



- Residential
- Institutional / Civic
- Retail
- Office
- Parking Garage
- Office / Residential Mix
- Residential / Retail Mix
- Office / Retail Mix

PROPOSED LAND USE

Proposed land uses both complement and enhance the mix of uses already present in Olde Towne. Retail, office, and residential uses, along with mixed-use structures that integrate these uses together are strategically located to create a vibrant, 24-hour Olde Towne.

New residential uses both increase home ownership opportunities and diversify the existing housing stock. The MARC rail station is more effectively leveraged by locating new residential uses near the railroad tracks. Furthermore, new residents living closer to the heart of Olde Towne will increase its 24-hour liveliness.

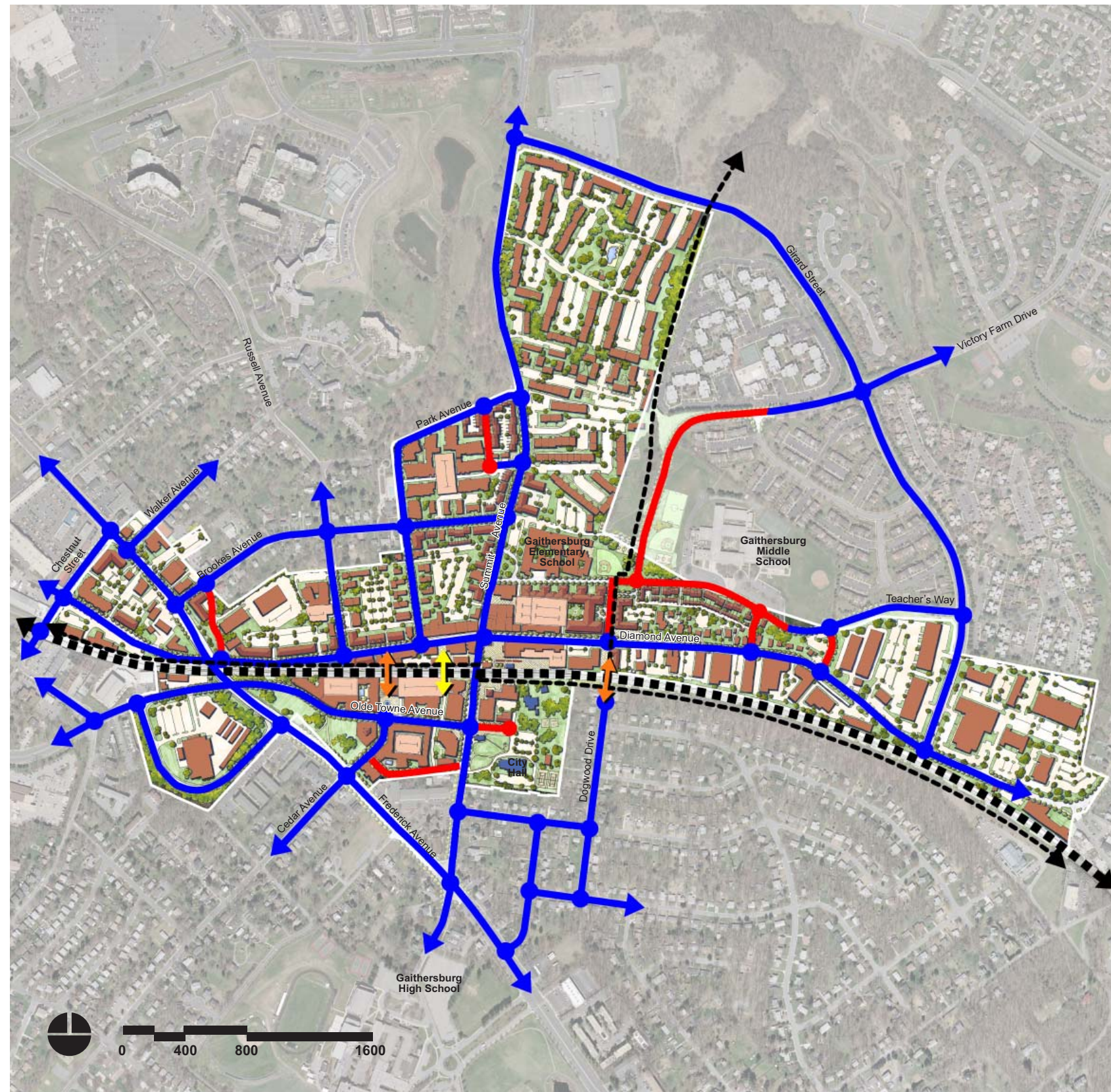
New retail and office uses are proposed near the intersection of Summit and Diamond Avenues as well as along the length of Diamond Avenue to the west. These new commercial uses enhance the commercial core and strengthen the “Main Street” feel of Diamond Avenue.






- On-Street Parking
- Surface Parking
- Structured Parking

PARKING

Consistent with traditional downtowns, proposed vehicular parking includes a mix of on-street, surface, and structured parking options. Where feasible, surface and structured parking should be located mid-block, behind structures to preserve Olde Towne's character and to improve the pedestrian environment. On-street parking should be encouraged wherever feasible.



-  CSX/ MARC/ AMTRAK
-  Existing Road
-  Proposed Road
-  Existing Pedestrian Bridge
-  Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
-  Hiker/Biker Trail

PROPOSED CIRCULATION NETWORK

Proposed improvements to the vehicular and pedestrian circulation network would greatly improve Olde Towne's access and visibility from adjacent neighborhoods. New roadway connections would distribute traffic more evenly, reducing the traffic burden Summit and Diamond Avenues now carry. Most significant of these connections are the extensions of Teacher's Way and Victory Farm Drive. Additional pedestrian bridges would create safe, direct crossings over the railroad tracks. The Hiker/Biker trail creates a valuable addition to Olde Towne's circulation network, linking residential neighborhoods to MARC rail stations, and cultural and open space resources. Part of a network, the trail would become a valuable recreational amenity for all Gaithersburg residents.

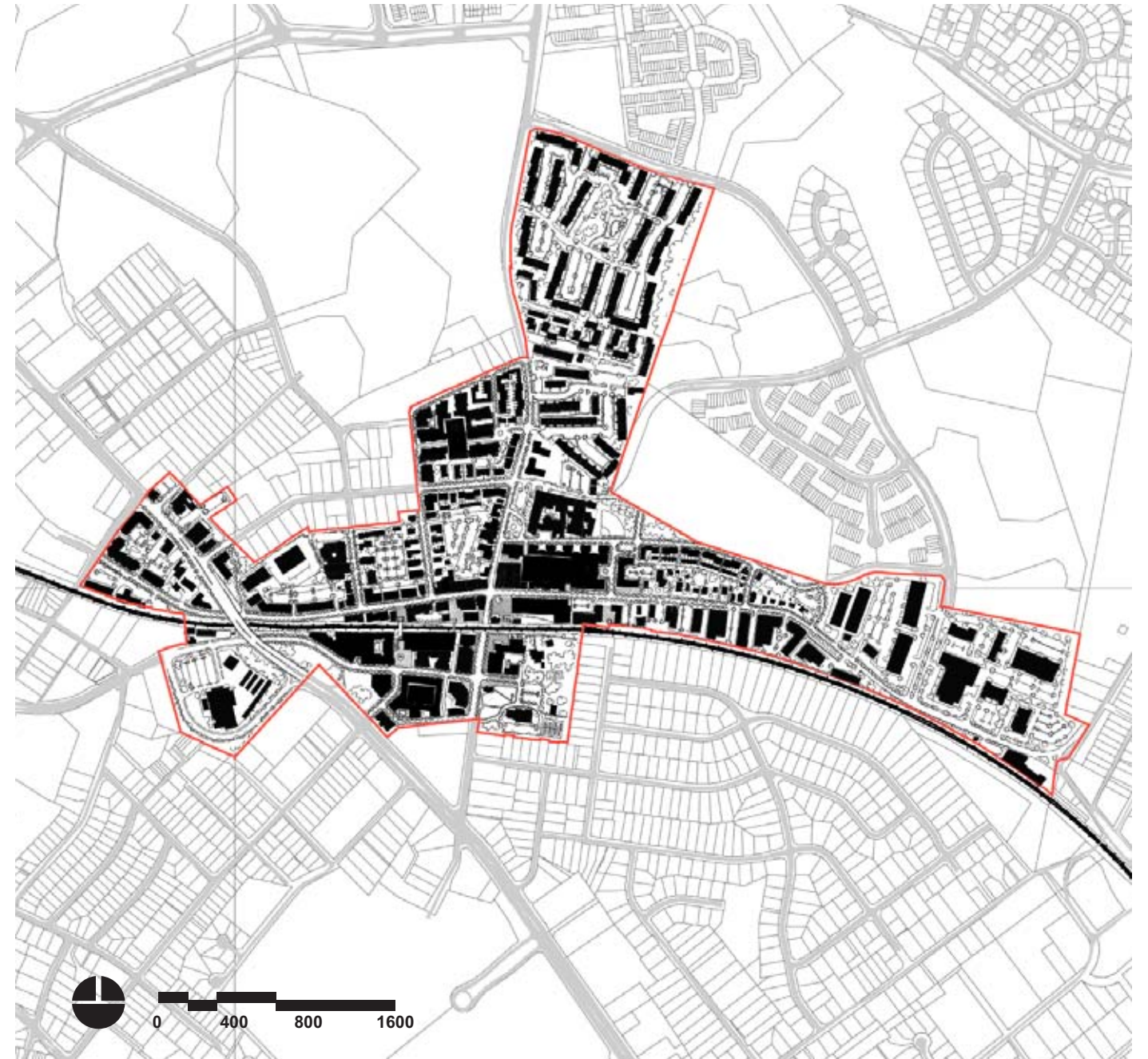
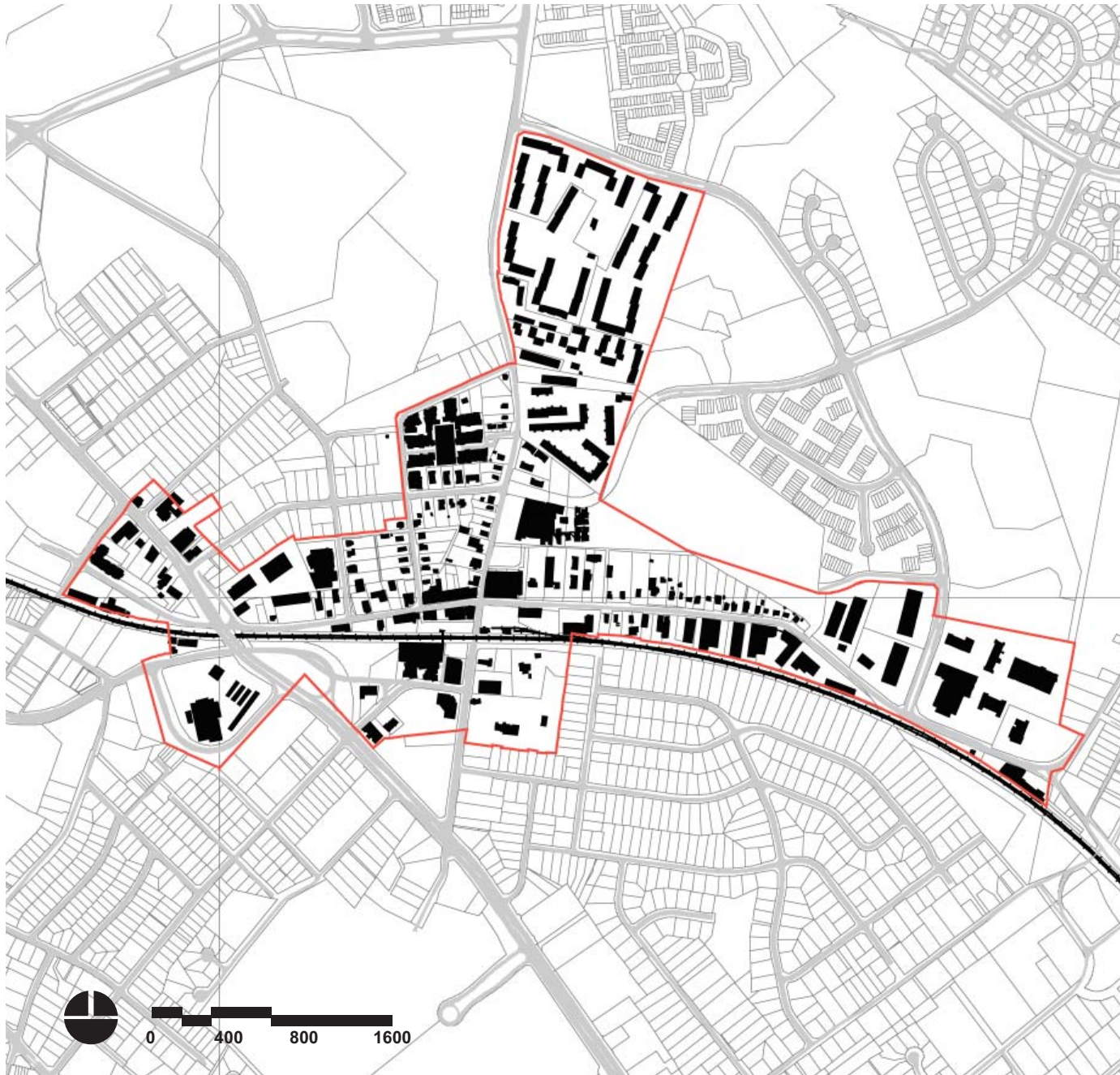


FIGURE GROUND

This series of Figure Ground diagrams illustrate the intensity of development as it exists today (left), and the proposed intensity of development at Olde Towne's 15 to 20 year build-out (right). All buildings are shown in black.



◀ Condition Before



◀ Condition After

PROPOSED TOWN HOME DEVELOPMENT

New residential development at the southwest corner of Summit and Park Avenues will create a welcoming gateway into Olde Towne from the north, diversify Olde Towne's housing stock, and increase home ownership opportunities.



◀ Condition Before



◀ Condition After

OLDE TOWNE PLAZA AND CLOCK TOWER

The plaza would be the locus of Olde Towne life and activity. New development will frame the plaza to the east and introduce a mix of uses—shops, cafes, restaurants with office uses above—that activate the space. Showcasing Olde Towne's rail heritage, the plaza is framed to the south by the historic train station, steam engine, and rail cars. The plaza space would be punctuated by a clock tower, serving as a recognizable Olde Towne landmark.

Shown in this winter scene is the plaza space converted to an ice skating rink, attracting City residents and visitors from throughout the region.



◀ Condition Before



◀ Condition After

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT THE “Y” SITE

Proposed development on the City-owned “Y” site will effectively capitalize on the high visibility and access afforded by its proximity to Frederick Avenue and the MARC rail station. A mix of uses—retail, office, residential—at a higher density will create a downtown vibrancy previously lacking south of the railroad tracks.

The plaza and “Grand Stairway”, leading to a proposed pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks, would provide a focus for this part of Olde Towne and create a comfortable place for residents and visitors alike to sit and relax.



- Near-Term Improvements
- Mid-Term Improvements
- Mid-Term Roadway Connections
- Mid-Term Trail Connections
- Long-Term Improvements

Development Program

	Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Total
Residential	860 units	115 units	20 units	995 units
Retail	111,500 sf	91,500 sf	77,400 sf	280,400 sf
Office	147,000 sf	145,500 sf	449,300 sf	741,800 sf

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The diagram at left prioritizes areas of the Preferred Draft Plan for near-term, mid-term, and long-term improvements. Near-term improvements strengthen the historic commercial core by encouraging mixed-use, retail, and residential development at key opportunity sites. The increase in residential density in the near-term would encourage and support future revitalization efforts. Mid-term improvements expand and connect the historic core by encouraging additional residential and infill retail development, consolidating surface parking, and implementing proposed roadway and hiker/biker trail connections. Long-term improvements extend the “Main Street” character of Diamond Avenue westward to Chestnut Street.

The chart above illustrates the proposed development program of the Master Plan. In the near-term, the program is consistent with the depth of demand projections shown on page 17. Unpredictable shifts in the economy and other market forces can make the depth of demand in the mid-term a little less specific. The development program in the mid-term, though slightly exceeding demand in retail and offices uses, is within acceptable parameters.



TORTI GALLAS AND PARTNERS, INC.
1300 Spring Street, 4th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910